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JOHANN WOLFGANG V. GOETHE GEB. AM XXVIII. AUGUST MDCCXLIX

CHARACTERISTICS

OF

GOETHE.

FROM THE GERMAN OF

FALK, VON MÜLLER,

&c.

WITH NOTES, ORIGINAL AND TRANSLATED,

ILLUSTRATIVE OF GERMAN LITERATURE,

BY SARAH AUSTIN.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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NOTES

ON

GOETHE.

EXTRACTED FROM THE

BIBLIOTHÈQUE UNIVERSELLE

DE GÉNÈVE.

THE following new and important addition to the materials for judging of Goethe is said to be from the pen of a nephew of the late Monsieur Dumont, of Geneva, who now holds the situation of tutor to the young princes of Weimar.

NOTES ON GOETHE.*

ON the morning of the twenty-second of March, 1832, Goethe terminated his long and brilliant career, in the arms of his daughter-in-law, surrounded by his grandchildren and his friends.

* We are indebted for this interesting notice to the kindness of one of our countrymen, who enjoyed peculiar opportunities of intimate access to Goethe during the latter years of his life. The former part, the object of which is to give a general view of the life of this extraordinary man, necessarily contains some facts already known†; but the author's peculiar connection with Goethe enables him to place some of them in a new light. The latter part will present the reader with some curious details concerning the close of the life of the illustrious poet, which are new to the public.—*Editor.*

† These I have omitted or abridged, as much as I could without injury to the article.—*Transl.*

In devoting some pages to this great man, our object is not to give a biographical notice, strictly so called; Goethe has left memoirs, the most interesting part of which, still unpublished, will appear before long. Several writers, too, have not waited until his death to publish the history of his life, and to repair, as far as it was in their power, the intentional omissions of the author. We shall therefore confine ourselves to a rapid sketch of the principal characteristics of his singular and glorious career; and shall enlarge on some details, less important, it is true, but less known.

It is not assuming too much to place Goethe's name at the head of almost every branch of knowledge. The splendour of his literary renown threw into the shade that to which he was entitled on other grounds. His labours in natural history, and even in physical science, would have sufficed to make the reputation of an ordinary *sçavant*.

[I pass over the sketch of Goethe's early years, gathered principally from his autobiography, only extracting one remark of the author, which is worthy of attention.]

We may observe that one of the great merits of Goethe's works—the perfect truth and accuracy of observation—is doubtless to be attributed to his having drawn his most beautiful inspirations from the history of his *own* life.* On this ground we are compelled to contemplate with interest some youthful love affairs, of small importance in themselves, but very essential to the right understanding and appretiation of most of his writings.

* The author particularizes the character of Gretchen in Faust, and the *Laune der Verliebten* (the Caprices of Lovers), Goethe's first dramatic essay, as instances of this. Jean Paul says, "To him, every poem is a casional poem. And his account of his life shows us that his Truth was not Poetry, but his Poetry, Truth, and that his poetical works are as truly children of his heart as his moral ones."—(*Kleine Bücherschau.*)—*Transl.*

[We resume our author's narrative in the year 1771. Goethe, then twenty-two, had returned to his native city.]

The three years which succeeded his return were among the most important of his life. Faithful to the universality of his tastes, he devoted his first hours of leisure to researches on architecture, to literary criticisms published in the journals of the day, and even to some enquiries on theological questions, of which we have one proof in his Letter from the pastor of * * to the pastor of * * * *, published at that time anonymously, and now extremely rare. It will be included in the collection of his posthumous works. What chiefly characterizes this short period, is the appearance of the first works which established Goethe's reputation; which influenced his whole future destiny; and doubtless determined the young prince of Weimar to become acquainted with a man whom he afterwards

succeeded in attaching to himself, not only as a useful and faithful servant, but as a friend, in the truest and noblest sense of the word. In 1773 appeared Goetz of Berlichingen: it had long been the subject of the young poet's meditations; it had long existed entire in his mind, but he had not determined to give it outward form and being. His sister, the intimate confidant of his thoughts, provoked its appearance by defying him to execute his project; stimulated by this doubt, he set to work, and in a month presented her with the finished work. The original manuscript is still in existence; it is interesting in various ways; the handwriting has not changed in the sixty years that have elapsed since it was written; and the extreme rareness of the erasures show that Goetz was a work of inspiration*.

* Goetz was not published as Goethe originally wrote it; it was considerably modified. The first text will be found in his posthumous works.

There are whole pages without a single trace of correction. This play procured him some strange *orders* for historical dramas, with offers of a handsome salary. For a moment he thought of accepting the proposition, and of presenting the principal facts of the history of Germany in a dramatic form; but circumstances, and the impulse of his genius, soon made him abandon the project.

In 1774 he published Werther*, the origin of which is too well known to need mention. The effect it produced was prodigious. Goethe was made responsible for some suicides of which his novel appeared to be the cause, but was, in fact, only the pretext. The author, who now ranked among the most eminent writers of the day, was so beset with commentaries, interpretations, criticisms, favorable or unfavorable, which Werther brought upon

* Also written in a month.

him, that he conceived a sort of disgust for his work, and generally turned the subject if any one spoke of it*. At the time of

* I accidentally turned upon this passage in the *Italiänische Reise.*

"Naples, May 22, 1787.

"Today an agreeable adventure befel me. It was well calculated to excite some reflection, and is worth recounting.

"A lady who had been very polite to me from my first arrival, sent to beg that I would be at her house punctually at five o'clock in the evening; for that an Englishman, who had something to say about my Werther, wished extremely to speak to me.

"Half a year ago, though the lady's friendship had been doubly as valuable to me as it is, my only answer would inevitably have been a refusal; and the very circumstance of my consenting proved to me that my Sicilian tour had had a happy effect upon me. I promised to come. Unfortunately, however, the city is so vast, and the objects that attract one's attention so numerous, that I arrived a quarter of an hour too late. I went up the stair-case, and was just standing on the rush mat before the door, in act to ring, when the door opened and a handsome man of middle age came out. I immediately recognized him as the Englishman. He looked at me, and instantly said, 'You are the author

the conference of Erfurt, Napoleon had an interview with Goethe, and made some critical remarks on Werther. In his unpublished memoirs, Prince Talleyrand has preserved many details which he drew from a good source, and which appear to be authentic, since Goethe did not contradict

of Werther.' I assented, and apologized for not coming earlier. 'I could not wait a moment longer,' replied he, 'what I have to say to you is very short, and can be said here, on the mat, as well as any where. I will not repeat what you have heard from thousands—and indeed, the work did not produce so violent an effect upon me as upon some others; but the oftener I think of all that it required to write it, the more I am lost in wonder.'

"I was going to say something by way of thanks, but he interrupted me, and exclaimed, 'I cannot stay a moment longer: my desire to say this to you myself has been satisfied; may you live well and happy!' and so saying, he ran down stairs. I stood for some time, pondering on this honourable text, and at length rang. The lady heard with pleasure that we had met, and told me much to the advantage of this remarkable and eccentric man."—*Italiänische Reise*, vol. ii.

[Does any body know who he was?—*Transl.*]

them when they were mentioned to him by the writer of this article*. But we have reason to think that all that passed between these two great men is not recorded in the memoirs in question. One of the friends of the poet has told us some circumstances which he will doubtless make known, unless Goethe's papers should contain notes on this curious interview†.

Goethe was scarcely twenty-four when he had already acquired an immense reputation, and received the invitation of the young Duke of Sachsen-Weimar. He accepted, without hesitation, a post which placed him in immediate contact with a

* Some extracts from this part of Prince Talleyrand's memoirs have been found among the manuscripts of our countryman M. Dumont, who bears testimony to the truth of the facts which had come under his own cognizance. It was these extracts which were communicated to Goethe.

† These notes have been found, but they are only slight and hasty memoranda.

prince capable of understanding him, and in the midst of a court where arts and letters were held in the highest respect. Weimar became his second country; he devoted himself to her service. The titles conferred upon him were not mere titles of honour;—they called upon him to consecrate his time to public affairs, and he entered upon these new duties with a zeal and interest which increased the confidence of his sovereign. From the year 1776, we see him raised to the post of Privy Counsellor of Legation, and having a seat and voice in the council. Wieland, who bore him no animosity in consequence of his early satire (*Götter, Helden und Wieland*), and had become sincerely attached to him, expressed a fear that these new occupations would impede his literary career. He did not know the universality and the force of his mind.

I shall venture to notice some circum-

stances relative to the rapid progress which Goethe made in the favour of the duke from the very beginning of his residence at Weimar. They are too honorable to both to be left to oblivion. It was in 1776 that Dr. Goethe (he had taken a degree as Doctor of Laws) suddenly passed from an obscure and unimportant political situation to one of great weight in the ministry. Some counsellors, of good intentions doubtless, but slaves of routine, or less capable of appretiating Goethe's merits than their enlightened master, pleaded the necessity of attending to the merits of older servants,—of avoiding the misrepresentations and the complaints of neglected claims which would probably arise. The duke, who had never adverted to the idea of *claims*, thought it incumbent on him to justify his conduct by making a solemn reply to these representations, and, taking up the pen, added these remarkable words, to

the protocol of the acts of the ministry, with his own hand.

" Enlightened persons congratulate me on possessing such a man. His genius and capacity are well known. To employ a man of such a stamp in any other functions than those in which he can render available the extraordinary gifts he possesses, is to abuse them. As to the observation, that persons of merit may think themselves unjustly passed over; I observe, in the first place, that nobody, to my knowledge, in my service, has a right to reckon on an equal degree of favour; and I add that I will never consent to be governed by mere length of service or rotation, in my choice of a person whose functions place him in such immediate relation to myself, and are so important to the happiness of my people. In such a case I shall attend to nothing but the degree of confidence I can repose in the person of my choice. The

public opinion, which perhaps censures the admission of Dr. Goethe to my council without his having passed through the previous steps of Bailiff, Professor, Counsellor of the Chamber, or Counsellor of Regency*, produces no effect on my own judgment. The world forms its opinion on prejudices; but I watch and work—as every man must who wishes to do his duty,—not to make a noise, not to attract the applause of the world, but to justify my conduct to God and my conscience."

Assuredly the prince who wrote these words at the age of nineteen was no ordinary man. Goethe took an active part in administration. Three years later he became Actual Privy Counsellor, and shortly afterwards was appointed President of the Chamber.

The fourth volume of his memoirs, the

* I translate all these titles from the French, and have no distinct notion of what they mean.—*Transl.*

manuscript of which has long been completed, turns upon the interesting period which preceded his arrival at Weimar. The visits to Carlsbad and the tour in Italy, the journal of which is already published*, may be considered as forming a sequel to the memoirs. Our readers will thank us for some details on this subject before we proceed.

It was in this period, so short but so eventful, that Goethe experienced a new sentiment, the recollection of which caused his heart to beat under the snow of eighty winters. It would be premature, if not indelicate, to give any, even the slightest history of it here. The reader will soon be put in possession of the original documents. The author of this notice will only record the delicate motives which so long deterred the poet from continuing his memoirs, or, when completed, from publishing them.

* Italiänische Reise.

In one of those *téte a téte* conversations which, with Goethe, were often so profoundly interesting, we were speaking with regret of the departure of a charming young person who had delighted the society of Weimar for some months, and who was nearly connected with the poet's early love. "How I regret," said he, "that I did not see her oftener,—that I deferred sending for her to talk to me alone, and trying to retrace some of the beloved features of her relative! The description you give recals *her* in some respects." This opened the way to some questions as to the continuation of the memoirs, and the reasons which had prevented Goethe from publishing them. "The fourth volume is ready," said he, "it will soon appear; it would have been published long ago if I had not been restrained by scruples which had her, not me, for their object. I should be proud to tell the whole world how tenderly I loved

her; I think she would not have blushed to confess that my love was requited; but had I a right to say so without having obtained her consent?—It was my intention to ask her:—now," added he, sighing, "there is no longer need. The interest with which you have talked to me of the young girl who has just left us has re-awakened all my old recollections, and I live again in another age, near her who was the first I loved with a love as profound as it was true,—her, who was perhaps the last—for the sentiments of that kind which occupied me afterwards were light compared to that. The delicacy which withheld me from saying of her to the public what I could so willingly have said of myself, is the sole cause of the delay in the publication of my memoirs; but when I took my pen to write to her and obtain her permission, I was stopped short by scruples of another kind.

"Never was I so near to happiness," con-

tinued he; "yes, I loved her as tenderly as she loved me: there was no obstacle which it would have been impossible to surmount*;—and yet I could not marry her! This sentiment was so peculiar, so delicate, that it influenced my style in the details I gave:—when you read them you will find nothing resembling the ideas of love which exist in novels. Ah, my dear friend, we must learn to accommodate ourselves to life as well as we can, to be able to support it, and not be prostrated by it!"

Such were his words; such was Goethe occasionally in intimate conversation, when his confidence came unasked; when some cord that vibrated to his heart or mind was touched, and when he discovered in his

* We know from authentic sources that Lili was disposed to put an end to these difficulties by accompanying Goethe to the United States. Although authorized to give more details concerning their mutual sacrifices, we think it right to confine ourselves here to this intimation.

companion an emotion in harmony with his own and unmixed with curiosity.

Every body agreed in acknowledging that the influence of Goethe over the young sovereign was very great; that it had a strong effect in enhancing the acuteness and sagacity for which the latter was remarkable, and heightening the expanded and lively interest he took in all that lay within the reach of human intelligence. In this respect the prince in no degree yielded to his minister; the influence was reciprocal; and the poet owed a great deal of the development of his power and of his productive energy to the *unique* situation in which he was placed, in the midst of a court where all the refined pleasures of life, and the enjoyments of a justifiable self-love, were unbought by constraint or by the sacrifice of any of his tastes. The services required of him were such as he rendered with zeal; he remained complete master

of his own individuality,—his genius had free course. His immense capacity of labour enabled him to indulge all his tastes without prejudice to his duties as a public man, or as an assiduous, though independant, attendant on the court.

We cannot refrain from noticing the absurd and unjust censure cast upon the poet by a French journalist, the ridicule of which will fall on the critic himself in the minds of all persons acquainted with the German language, but which is calculated to give to others a false impression of Goethe's character. In addressing the duke, the poet uses the expression, *mein gnädigster Herr*, which, literally translated, is, "my most gracious master" (or Sir), equivalent to *Monseigneur*. This is the conventional expression: it is employed not only in addressing princes, but towards all persons of high rank from their inferiors*. The writer, from ignorance,

* *Gnädige*, or even *Gnädigste*, *Frau* is the common ad-

has reproached Goethe with the servility of his language and of his sentiments. Those who knew him can attest that in his intercourse with crowned heads he invariably preserved a noble independance, mingled with courtesy and respect. In relation to his sovereign, whom he loved tenderly, for whom he felt the liveliest gratitude and the sincerest admiration, he never sacrificed his convictions to the etiquette of a court: he testified his gratitude and his love by recording the benefits he had received in a beautiful poem (1). He proved them, by resisting the most advantageous offers from other parts of Germany.

Goethe's two visits to Italy were near together; the first took place in 1787. It was between these two journeys that he and Schiller became acquainted. For a long

dress of men to women who have the air or station of gentlewomen, and expresses only the deferential civility of good breeding.—*Transl.*

time they were kept asunder by a diver gence of their fundamental principles of philosophy, and of their literary views. After proceeding for a long time in a parallel course, without ever seeking to approach each other, chance led to a very animated conversation between them on the subject of the metamorphosis of plants. They did not understand each other, but they learned to esteem each other more; and, in the course of a warm debate, the foundation was laid for an unalterable friendship*. The thing which affected Goethe the most in the course of the discussion, was, that Schiller attributed the theory of the metamorphosis to the *development of an Idea*, and not to a series of facts observed and

* It was not till three years later (1794) that this friendship was cemented by the publication of the *Horen*, in which Schiller invited Goethe to take part. The influence of Herder, who detested the philosophy of Kant and his partisans, explains in some degree the distance between Goethe and Schiller.

compared with care, with a view to the deduction of a general law. This same reproach, or similar ones, were addressed to Goethe by critics less competent than Schiller. He had long the mortification of seeing his Metamorphosis neglected by men of science, as a work of mere imagination; by ignorant persons, as a subject little favourable to poetry.

The critics were not wholly wrong; but Goethe, who in order to arrange his notions, had certainly in some degree conformed to an *à priori* theory, or to what Schiller called *an Idea*, did not set out from that Idea in the pursuit of his extensive attainments in natural history; nor did he content himself with elucidating it by a series of imaginary facts. He had long studied botany, according to the theories and the classification of the time; he had long and perseveringly accumulated all the elements of vegetable physiology within his

reach; and it was not till a later period that he thought he discovered a common origin in the different organs of vegetables, and that he conceived the possibility of explaining all the phenomena of vegetation by that successive development to which he gave the name of metamorphosis. Thus the *Idea* with which he was reproached, was, to him, the result of labour and observation, and it may easily be conceived that he must feel some impatience when people persisted in seeing nothing in it but an ingenious invention. Having once conceived the possibility of substantiating such a theory, Goethe commenced a new series of observations on vegetable life, in order to confirm by facts the deductions which naturally flowed from his fundamental thesis. The original designs, the numerous notes he collected, still exist as evidences of his industry and conscientious ardour for truth; and if we refrain from insisting

further on this point, it is because we have in our possession a new edition of the Metamorphosis, in which Goethe himself gives the history of his studies and his labours. We shall return to this subject hereafter.

The tempest of the French revolution, which gathered with increasing heaviness, and menaced Italy, forced him to quit that lovely country sooner than he had intended. A year had scarcely elapsed after his return when he set out on another journey as full of difficulties and privations as the other had been rich in enjoyments. The Duke of Weimar, who took part in the disastrous expedition into Champagne, was accompanied by his minister and most confidential friend*. The crisis and the circumstances were too momentous to dispose the poet to literary occupations; but, in the

* The thirtieth volume of Goethe's works (last edition) consists of the *Campagne in Frankreich* (Campaign in France.)—*Transl.*

midst of danger and trial, his mind did not remain inactive. It was during this campaign that he followed up with the greatest perseverance his enquiries into the theory of light, of which he had given a sketch in a little essay now become extremely rare*.

We seize this occasion to remark one characteristic of this extraordinary man;— if we follow him throughout his long and splendid career, we find that at the periods when his mind was struggling under some painful trial, he devoted himself exclusively to science, whereas his literary productions were elaborated in moments of calm. We see traces of this peculiarity in the history of his youth; he leaves Leipsig, sick at heart, discouraged, and his first occupations under the paternal roof are connected with physical science. He abandons Frederica, returns to Frankfurt, and betakes himself to the study of archi-

* Beitrage zur Optik. 1791.

tecture, to criticism, and to theological enquiries. His optical studies are commenced during the storms of the revolution; and lastly, we shall see him, when suffering under the loss of his royal friend, undertake a new edition of his Metamorphosis, work at it for months with ardour, then, when time had restored him to tranquillity, let his work lie by, and resume it, and hasten its publication after the afflicting news of the death of his only son. We might add many lesser details to these leading facts, for it was always in study that he sought refuge in the moment of trial; it was always in the contemplation of nature that he sought and found consolation under sorrow.

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In 1805 appeared *Rameaus Neffe,* translated from a manuscript of Diderot, the original of which was only found and restored to French literature in 1818. The

history of this literary curiosity is too well known to need recounting here, but the perfection and the fidelity with which Goethe has rendered it into German are the more remarkable, since he was far from being a faithful translator of his own works. His friends possess some rare fragments of his poems put into French for foreigners to whom they were addressed; they are rather paraphrases than translations; they contain new images, equal in beauty to those of the original text.

In 1810 appeared his Theory of Colours, a work in two volumes, the one didactic, the other historical. It was the fruit of long meditations. *Sçavans* have treated this result of assiduous labours with haughty indifference; ignorant men would not read it, for, to their eyes, it was evidently enough a scientific work, and not a *poésie manquée*, like the Metamorphosis of Plants.

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The theory he has substituted for that of Newton is, unquestionably, very vulnerable on many points; but we persist in thinking that this work contains a vast number of new views, and of experiments of great interest. We recommend it to the meditation of impartial readers; they will gather from it new lights which may exercise great influence on this branch of physics.

Goethe has been accused of excessive susceptibility to criticism. It is important to correct this false impression. There never was a man of genius who displayed more modesty, more docility to counsel, than the great man whose loss we deplore. He attached, it is true, considerable value to the homage addressed to him, to the multiplied proofs of admiration which he received from al quarters; but he scarcely ever spoke of them, even to his most intimate friends; or if he did, it was in a tone so natural, so unaffected, that it was evi-

dently the expression of contentment, and not of pride.

He detested, with an energy which might seem like violence, criticisms dictated by malice, envy, or absurdity. It was not because they were directed against himself, but because they were intrinsically bad; for his indignation was just as great when they fell upon another victim. Besides, he never complained of them openly; he punished his detractors by silence—a moderation which offended self-love does not always observe. As to criticism inspired by friendship, or laid before him in a becoming manner, the persons who had intimate access to him have had abundant proofs that he received it with the greatest pleasure, and with a surprizing docility, even when it ventured to touch his highest literary claims;—he was irritable only on scientific points.

One of his friends, Hofrath Riemer,

(known throughout Germany not only as a learned Hellenist, but also as a poet of eminence) after being tutor to the son, preserved with the father a sort of connexion which supports our assertion. Goethe wrote nothing without consulting him, went over all his works with him, admitted his grammatical corrections with a submission (if I may be allowed the word) and a deference, which never varied, and which he might have very fairly dispensed with after sixty years of established renown. The young Pindars of our days indulge themselves in every licence, and brave every criticism, under shelter of the acclamations of the multitude.

We must also mention Dr. Eckermann, who was invited to Weimar by Goethe in 1824, to assist in the redaction of his manuscripts, and in the publication of the general edition of his works. More than once did this young *littérateur* prevail on

the patriarch of German poetry to make considerable changes in his works, and on no occasion did Goethe, who had the power of crushing with a word, oppose any painful resistance. The author of this article has made similar experiments at the time of the publication of the Metamorphosis; he easily obtained the suppression of some passages which he thought susceptible of misinterpretation, though Goethe attached importance to them. Such was this great man with relation to subjects so intimately connected with the surest sources of his fame: but his adviser must understand him; must speak from conviction; must admire what was good, not because he wrote it, but because it bore the stamp of truth; must criticise what was weak, not with the air of having a right to attack it, or of wishing to pass in his eyes for an infallible judge, but solely from respect for truth.

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When he came into contact with his antagonists, he addressed them with the greatest politeness and reserve, and carefully avoided subjects of dispute. Even those who did not share his opinions, or who had no opinions, were delighted to hear his conversation, which was always striking and picturesque. I repeat—Goethe had no rancour against his critics, provided their objections were not dictated by bad faith or malevolence;—provided mediocrity did not seize on some weak point for the sake of depreciating superiority and genius.

It was not till the year 1811 that he determined, after long hesitation, to publish some details of the history of his life; not in the form of cotemporaneous memoirs, but solely with the design of enlightening his friends and readers on the peculiar circumstances which might be supposed to have favoured his intellectual development. This narrative serves at

once as a connecting bond and a key to his works. For this reason he speaks by preference of his first steps in the journey of life; of his connection and acquaintance with superior men; of his studies; of his early loves; but he stops at the period when maturity of age and experience might be supposed to fix that of intellectual power.

The journals of his travels in Italy and visits to Carlsbad may be considered as the continuation or crown of the autobiography, on account of the influence which these excursions exercised on his mind. According to the plan he had traced out to himself, here he was to stop; and readers eager for court gossip, or political revelations, have no right to reproach him with being so niggard of them,—with having stopped short at the moment when cotemporaneous history became the most deeply interesting,—for he had fulfilled his purpose, and his mind

was perfectly made up not to continue his biography beyond the fourth volume, which we have announced. He had a strong antipathy to works relating to the events of the day, or to living persons. "One must place oneself at a certain distance from objects to be able to judge correctly of them," said he, "and to appretiate all the circumstances that connect them. If we speak of them when we touch them, we run the risk of speaking like a blind man, for we are disqualified from measuring their true proportions. I leave these things to those who come after me."

Goethe, however, took notes of every circumstance that struck or interested him in the events of his daily life—his reading, his conversations, his intercourse with friends or foreigners. He has given some extracts, as a sequel to his biography in the great edition of his works, stopping at 1822*.

* The *Tag-und-Jahres Hefte,* to which I have had

These extracts have no very strong interest for any but those who were intimately acquainted with the great poet and his habits; but, to other readers, they may at least serve to show the vast field of thoughts and occupations which lay beneath the ken of a mind always active, always susceptible to the Beautiful,—acquiring and creating up to the fatal day on which death put a period to his labours. Goethe's intention was, that sooner or later some use should be made of his notes, and we may hope that after the publication of his manuscript works the editors will enrich German literature with the treasures which may be gathered from his private journals and his general correspondence.

To conclude this subject, let us once more

occasion to refer so often, and of which I have already spoken as highly interesting. In spite of the judgment expressed above, I can only repeat that to me it appears so.—*Transl.*

remind our readers that we must not look for Goethe's life in his autobiography. His entire life is in his works. They are so many different reflexes of different states of his own outer and inner being; and the subordinate characters in them are generally persons who have exercised more or less influence over his destiny or his sentiments. He might have revealed himself more distinctly; but mystery was with him the object of a sort of reverence, or the result of a system. We may suppose him to have said, "I will reveal myself only to those who can understand me, and they will divine me at half a word."

The seven or eight years which succeeded the composition of his memoirs produced little for the public. Goethe continued, no doubt, to work in the silence of the closet; but the events which agitated Europe were not favourable to literature. We consequently see the poet return anew to his se-

verer studies, occupy himself with natural history, the arts, and antiquities, while he still continued to give some outward signs of intellectual life by publishing a semi-periodical journal specially devoted to the two latter subjects. The first number of *Kunst und Alterthum* appeared in 1816, and was followed by others at indeterminate intervals; it contains critiques on works relating to art, or original dissertations on the same subject. The articles are not all by Goethe; he received the contributions of strangers, and several of the most important are from the learned pen of Mr. Henry Meyer, one of his oldest friends, whose name constantly recurs in his correspondence and works, and who was worthy of the high estimation in which Goethe held him, from the extent of his acquirements, the justness of his criticism, and his singular modesty. This journal remains unfinished, as well as another which bears the

name of *Morphologie* (1819), and which contains a variety of matter connected with Goethe's former physical researches, or corroborative of his theories. Articles from strangers, and criticisms were admitted, as in the *Kunst und Alterthum*. It is to be hoped that the unpublished materials which exist may be used for the completion of these two journals.

The year 1819 was remarkable for the appearance of the "Divan," in which Göethe once more came forth as poet of the highest order, and in a style totally different from any of his former productions. He pours all the gorgeous colouring of the east over the profoundest reflexions, thus uniting the wisdom of age with the fresh and brilliant imagination of youth. He was then sixty-five.

Faust appeared as early as 1790, in the first general edition sanctioned by the author. This extraordinary drama, one of

his strongest titles to fame, is universally known; for though it may be regarded as impossible to translate some parts of it, the attempts which have been made to introduce it into the literature of other countries have sufficed to diffuse admiration of it, and to awaken a suspicion, at least, of the beauties of the original. The first conception of this wondrous poem dates from the time when he was yet a student, and it is the only work which continually occupied his mind, and the composition of which lasted during his whole life. Faust has been several times translated into English and French*. It is, as is generally known, only the first canto of a poem; the sequel, which was believed to be unfinished, will appear in his posthumous works in five acts, con-

* I do not know to what English translations the author can allude. He could not know of that just published by the translator of von Savigny's *Beruf*. I have never heard of any other except that of Lord L. Gower. Perhaps he includes Shelley's fragments.—*Transl.*

ceived long since, but written at different epochs. Some fragments of it exist in the general edition in forty volumes. The principal is the episode entitled "Helena." It contains scenes of singular vigour, the latter of which were composed but few years ago. Spite of some great beauties, the impossibility of finding any link between it and Faust chilled the interest which it ought to have inspired, and Goethe must have regretted publishing it prematurely. The second part was not finished, and as he did not reckon on the possibility of living long enough to publish it himself, and had perhaps determined to leave that task to his editor, he could not resist the desire of sounding the opinion of his readers.

Faust may be considered as the first and last song of the poet. Two of the acts of the second part were written very recently, and it was not till a few weeks before his death that he beheld the completion of his

work. His daughter-in-law is the only person to whom he read it. It would not become us to disclose whatever we may have heard of his plan, nor can any abridged analysis give an idea of it.

Superficial travellers, or manufacturers of magazine articles, calculating the decline of genius by ordinary rules, and by Goethe's advanced age, have repeated with great complacency that they lamented to observe the intellectual failure of this great man, and that they could not hope to see any thing proceed from his pen, comparable to the productions of his youth. The decay of the faculties of a man of eighty is *a common-place.* But Goethe was *not* an exhausted fountain, as people thought, or affected to think;—the spring produced a stream less copious, indeed, but as limpid as ever. Not to mention light and occasional poems, which he continued to write to the last moment, we shall only

adduce the "Trilogy of the Passions," a piece which has perhaps no equal among his other writings. This was composed in 1823, on his return from his last journey to Carlsbad. It is to be found in the first volume of his complete works. The first canto was originally annexed to a little edition of Werther which appeared at that time. The second refers to emotions of a very recent date, yet when we read it we think we perceive the beating of the heart of a man of thirty. The third part was composed for a Polish lady, who played on the pianoforte with extraordinary talent, and whom we heard at Goethe's house shortly before that dangerous illness which was near terminating his life.

In 1827, and the succeeding years, he revised the whole of his works and made numerous alterations. New scientific researches were added to these occupations; and we shall see this extraordinary man,

thus vigorously employed to the very end of life, evince an activity as great, a fecundity as exhaustless, in society, in conversation, in correspondence.

The year 1827 inflicted upon Goethe the heaviest blow he was doomed to feel; the grand duke ended his long and beneficent life in the course of a journey. The grand duchess was at Wilhelmsthal, near Eisenach, and, to complete the fatality, the hereditary court was also absent. He was so overpowered by this irreparable loss that, contrary to his custom and to the rules he had laid down to himself, he yielded to his grief, and even gave vent to it in his correspondence.

These rules were not the offspring of selfishness, but the result of observation and of a great force of will. Susceptible to a high degree, he would have obeyed every impulse, he would have been the sport of passions which would have poisoned and

shortened his life, had he not early acquired the habit of opposing labour and study to affliction and regret; only, as we have already remarked, his labour changed its nature. Goethe ceased to create,—a thing impossible in the hour of real suffering,—but he resumed the task of observation and enquiry, and sought the consolation he needed in the contemplation of the wonders of nature.

We have reason to believe that he would have found it difficult to obey his own self-imposed laws on this occasion, had not circumstances kindly come to his aid. The chief of these was his anxiety for the effect of this calamitous event on the feeble frame of the grand duchess. The successor to the throne, and all the ducal family showed an attentive solicitude to soften the weight of his loss, to which he could not be insensible. He gratefully accepted the proposal that he should

quit Weimar for a time, and take up his abode at Dornburg, where he recovered sufficient tranquillity to devote himself to botany. He seized with ardour on the project of publishing all he had written on the Metamorphosis of Plants in a new edition, entirely recast, and of adding the result of his latest investigations.

A French translation of the Metamorphosis contributed perhaps to revive his interest in this favourite science. He not only revised the former text, but added many new details to the historical part of his work. This interesting essay ought to be considered as an essential part of his Memoirs; but it must be read in the original; the translation was too hastily executed to give a just idea of the merit of the original. He then studied the *Organographie* of our celebrated countryman Decandolle with the greatest care, and translated some chapters which he intended to

append to his *Morphologie*. His letters at this time were full of expressions extremely flattering to the first botanist of our day. Various materials on this subject will form part of his posthumous works.

Having thus taken a rapid survey of Goethe's principal works, let us return to some details relative to his life.

In 1825 three jubilees were celebrated in the grand duchy;—the fiftieth anniversary of the sovereign's accession, that of his marriage, and, somewhat later, that of Goethe's acceptance of active employment in his service. These *fêtes* were extremely brilliant; they were described in all the newspapers of the day, and formed the subject of special works containing the most circumstantial details. The *fête* in honour of the sovereign was appropriate to the spirit of his reign; useful establishments sprung up in all directions; schools, plantations, *&c.* were the monuments destined to

hand down to posterity the memory of the day;—of the love of the people and the merits of the prince. Goethe's jubilee was not less worthy of his genius and character. His august patrons caused a gold medal to be struck in his honour*. The same justice was done to his merits, the same attention paid to his wishes, by their successors, who endeavoured to prove to him that, much as he had lost, the sentiments of their predecessors survived in them. And Goethe, on his side, payed the debt of gratitude and love to the fourth generation. He took the liveliest interest in the grandchildren and great grandchildren of Karl August.

* The medal from which the frontispiece to this volume is taken. It is an exquisite work of art. From one of the works alluded to above, called *Goethe's Jubeltag* (Goethe's Jubilee-day), I have extracted the letter of the duke accompanying the medal, and some particulars which I hope will not be found uninteresting. (See Note 2.)—*Transl.*

Those who were near witnesses of the long intimacy, the honourable ties, which bound Goethe to his princely friends, find it difficult to understand how his attachment to them can have been turned into a subject of reproach, or stigmatized as servility. Nothing could be less servile, we repeat, than his life at Weimar; he enjoyed absolute independance; not one of his tastes, not one of his habits, was thwarted. His opinion was consulted on all important occasions; his wishes were almost always fulfilled: for more than fifteen years he had ceased to appear at court, and all the demands of etiquette had been dispensed with at his desire*. He knew that this would be regarded merely as the need

* On one occasion, as a German friend told me, when Goethe was at court, it happened that he was in one room and the grand duke in another. By degrees the whole company had gathered around the poet and left the prince nearly alone. "Come," said he, good humouredly to some one at his side, "we must do like the

felt by a laborious old man for calm and retirement, in which to make the most of his remaining days and to preserve his health. His connection with the reigning family, far from being in any degree impaired, became only the more intimate, for all of them showed the greatest eagerness to visit him at his own house, and to pass hours which seemed short in his society. Goethe was happy in their presence, and his conversation, animated by pleasure, was then peculiarly interesting. The foreign princes who passed through Weimar willingly conformed to his habits. Nor ought this homage paid to genius to be regarded as a speculation to catch the applauses of the poet. With the exception of some few occasional pieces for the reigning house to which he was attached, Goethe rarely made

rest. Let us go and pay our respects to Goethe." I give this on hearsay evidence, but there is substantial proof enough that it is likely to be true.—*Transl.*

great people the subject of his writings. His was no mercenary pen; and if he was the friend of power, it was the power which had fostered his genius and left its course unfettered.

He never replied to the libels and unjust censures directed against him by the enemies of every kind of superiority, or by the partisans of exaggerated opinions in religion or in politics; not because he was indifferent to all their criticisms, but because he regarded most of these attacks as too absurd to be dangerous to his fame, too unworthy of him to need reply. To friendly criticism his answer was, assiduous endeavours to perfect his works, and new creations equal in beauty to those which had preceded them. We shall imitate his example, and forbear all mention of writers who regard every friend of law and order as an enemy of mankind.

But persons whose opinion is really valu-

able may have been led into error as to Goethe's principles. We shall endeavour to give them in a few words, premising, that as political discussion is foreign to our aim, we neither attack nor defend them. Perhaps we may have the good fortune to correct some erroneous impressions.

The same love of order which distinguished Goethe in private affairs formed the basis of his opinions on public interests. He had a decided aversion to all violent shocks, which, though perhaps productive of future benefit, are certain to cause present evil. The established government was, in his eyes, the sacred ark which could not be attacked without shaking society to its foundations, but which ought to be gradually reformed and perfected. Every forward step set by the human race, every accession of light, every increase of prosperity, every favourable change, was hailed by him with a sort of transport; but he

dreaded all abrupt and violent transitions; and when it happened that he censured enterprizes and projects which commanded the approbation of warm and generous hearts, it was only because he was too clear-sighted not to discover private interests and private hatreds behind the mask of devotion to the public cause. It must be remembered, too, that he had been a personal sufferer from troubles, wars, and revolutions; while, on the contrary, he had known the governments and sovereigns attacked, only on their favourable side; he could not wish to change a certain for an uncertain good, which, even if it were obtained, would be bought at the expense of all he loved and valued the most. We shall add but one word to foreigners. The complaints which might justly be made against the governments of other countries were wholly inapplicable to that in which Goethe held the post of minister of state. The grand

duchy of Saxony is distinguished among the states of Germany for the number of excellent princes it has had, and for the progressive intelligence of its administration*.

The fear of prolonging this notice beyond due limits deters us from publishing a conversation held with Goethe on the progress of civilization. It would have contributed to make him better known. Perhaps it will find a place elsewhere. We

* See *Rapport sur l'état de l'Instruction Publique dans quelques pays de l'Allemagne, par M. Victor Cousin, Conseiller d'Etat* (of France), *&c.*, Part I. (including Saxony) from which I have ventured to make some short extracts. They will be found in another part of this volume, appended to the memoir of Karl August. It cannot be foreign to the object of this work to show that Goethe's loyalty to his prince was well-founded and reasonable, and I have therefore no scruple in corroborating the statements of persons connected with the government of Weimar (and thence suspected witnesses) by those of a member of the French government, whose reports on the state of the educated parts of Germany are profoundly interesting.—*Transl.*

shall only mention here that Dr. Eckermann has carefully collected the most remarkable passages of his conversations with his illustrious friend, and has arranged them for publication. Goethe, who was informed of his intention, saw a considerable part of the work, which he approved and encouraged. We must express our hope that the publication of his posthumous works will not so entirely absorb the leisure of their editor as to prevent him putting the last hand to his interesting collection. Dr. Eckermann's functions brought him into daily contact with Goethe; not only was he with him during the hours of their common labours, but he dined with him habitually; and it was after dinner and in the course of his rides that Goethe's conversation was the most delightful. It was studded with epigrams and paradoxes, but the most felicitous remarks and expressions softened their effect;

and what appeared contradictory was, to those initiated into his ways of thinking, in conformity with his general views.

Having spoken of the connection which subsisted between Dr. Eckermann and Goethe, it seems natural to describe, in as few words as possible, that which he kept up with a small number of friends during the latter years of his life. As we had not the happiness of knowing him till the year 1822, it does not fall within our province to speak of what happened before that time; we shall confine ourselves to what came under our own notice, in the persuasion that this short account will be sufficient to give the reader an idea of the manner and degree in which he turned existence to account.

The earliest and most intimate of his friends resident at Weimar, was unquestionably Mr. Meyer*, of whom we have

* See Note 8, vol. i.

had occasion to speak, and whose name, inseparable from the history of Goethe and Schiller, occurs continually in their correspondence, and in the other works of the former. His prodigious memory, his exhaustless knowledge of the history of art, his judicious criticism, his gentle, unpretending manners, his talent as an artist,—all conspired to attract Goethe to him from the first moment of their acquaintance. From that time, during a period of more than forty years, the intimacy of these two men, so capable of understanding each other, never varied. The poet always had recourse to the painter for all that concerned an important part of his labours; it was with Meyer that he went over his rich collections of engravings, antiquities, and medals; that he arranged the observations which they called forth; that he criticised works of art, and that he published, first the *Propyläen* and afterwards *Kunst und*

Alterthum. Meyer, in virtue of his office as President of the School of Design, established by the grand duke, had likewise to submit the results of his labours to Goethe, as minister of state charged with the public instruction. Lastly—Meyer was, to Goethe, the one precious link connecting the Past with the Present.

Hofrath Riemer was also under Goethe's orders as head librarian of the grand-ducal library, though this was not the basis of their union. Mr. Riemer was invited to live with Goethe on a footing of intimacy which he knew how to appretiate, and which continued unbroken. For a long time he performed the functions which Dr. Eckermann afterwards discharged; and when new duties obliged him to devote his time otherwise, he still continued to work regularly with Goethe. He always passed two evenings of the week at his house, in revising his manuscripts, discussing grammatical

difficulties, and performing, with regard to philology and moral science, offices analogous to those which Mr. Meyer rendered in the fine arts. To him is confided the publication of an invaluable correspondence between Goethe and one of his intimate friends; it is almost entirely prepared for the press, but will not appear at present.

One of the persons who saw him the most frequently and familiarly, was Chancellor and Privy Counsellor von Müller*, on whom now rests the sad but honourable duty of executing his last will. His connection with Goethe was of a less special nature. He was, so to say, the mediator between him and society. Possessing in a singular degree the talent of collecting interesting facts of every kind, and of relating them in a piquante manner,—endowed with

* Author of "Goethe considered as a Man of Action," and of the Memoirs of the Grand Duke and Grand Duchess, contained in these volumes.—*Transl.*

an imagination as mobile as it was poetical, he enlivened his conversation with every thing he had seen or heard, and Goethe delighted to draw from this abundant source the information he wanted, if not for work, for recreation;—for no sort of topic was uninteresting to him. He lent an ear to the gossip of the day, to the light talk of society, as well as to the most important questions. Nothing was above or below his truly universal mind; any one was sure to be heard with interest, or at least with indulgence, who could tell him of a new fact; or rather, as he would have expressed it, could clothe what was old in a new garb; for, in his eyes, invention was only the reproduction, or resurrection of ancient truths. Independently of this intellectual intimacy, Herr von Müller rendered important services to Goethe as a politician and a lawyer. Kind and obliging in the highest degree, a warm and devoted friend, his attach-

ment and veneration for the poet were unbounded.

Architecture in all its branches, and the mathematical sciences, had their representative attached to Goethe in the person of Mr. Coudray, chief superintendent of building in the grand duchy. An intimacy like those we have described gave the same interest to their connection.

Hofrath Vogel, the physician to the grand duke, a few years before his death became physician to Goethe, who discovered in him something more than an ordinary practician, and found in his conversation abundant food for the gratification of his curiosity concerning physiology, anatomy, theories of medicine and psychology. The Doctor's almost daily visits soon took a higher character than that of mere consultations, and Goethe, who had given proofs of his knowledge of comparative anatomy in some dissertations and essays, kept up with the

progress of the science by means of this new connection. Dr. Vogel dedicated his Theory of Medical Cures* to him, a work which presents views as new as they are remarkable. On the death of Goethe's son, Dr. Vogel succeeded to the post he occupied under his father as co-director (*directeur-adjoint*) of the various establishments for public instruction, of which the latter was head.

Lastly, natural history, more particularly botany and mineralogy, had their representatives in attendance on this all-comprehensive genius. The one, though resident at Jena, may nevertheless be considered as in habitual intercourse with Goethe, both as professor of botany and director of the botanic garden, and as contributing his portion of reports and observations to one who made so good a use of them. The other is the author of this article.

* "Versuch einer neuen Darstellung der praktischen Heilmittellehre."

If we went back to an earlier period, we should find Goethe surrounded by other men bound to him by similar ties; but, as we have said of them, we could not speak as eye-witnesses. We have also confined ourselves to his most familiar relations with persons who had free access to him; but it will be understood, of course, that all men of intellectual eminence in the grand duchy were more or less in connection with the central point towards which all radiated.

We regret that we can name only his intimate friends among the foreigners with whom he kept up a correspondence, often very important, and always with a view to practical utility. Among them we find sovereigns who were enlightened enough to acknowledge his intellectual sovereignty, all the most honoured names of Germany, and, indeed, of Europe;—a few will give some idea of the value and extent of their correspondence. Count von Sternberg at

Prague, the two Humbolds, Zelter, and Rauch at Berlin, Rochlitz at Leipsig, Quand at Dresden, J. Boisserée at Stuttgard, Reinhard, Venth, Varnhagen von Ense, *&c.* were among his distant friends and correspondents. To this abridged list must be added another, of distinguished persons of all countries, such as Byron, Walter Scott, Carlyle, Manzoni, Jonkowsky, Cuvier, Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, David the sculptor, some of the young French poets, *&c.*, a complete enumeration of whom would fill too much space here.

The habit which Goethe had contracted of extracting the utmost possible from every person, and from every instant, led him always to desire to see each of us alone*. He reserved his most animated conversation for *tête-à-tête*. The love of order, which distinguished him in so remarkable a de-

* Another coincidence with the tastes and habits of Mr. Bentham.—*Transl.*

gree, rendered him unwilling to fall into a mixture of subjects, or into mere desultory talk; his friends all found their account in this system, and willingly conformed to it; each of them seemed, by this means, to possess him more exclusively. But, though Goethe preferred to dwell with each on the subject of his peculiar vocation, I by no means wish to have it understood that he regarded them as mere instruments; he often quitted the main topic and fell into a confidential chat still more delightful and precious: but his companion must not try to lead him into this by ill-timed or indiscreet questions; for then he either wrapped himself in obscurity, or mystified the unhappy questioner without mercy.

Let us now pass to nearer and dearer ties—to those which consoled the old man, bereft of his son, and of the friends and protectors of his youth. Since these great blows he had almost entirely given up those

evening parties in which he used to receive foreigners, the literary society of Weimar, and occasionally his enthusiastic and somewhat turbulent young countrymen. With regard to the former, he fixed one hour in the week, generally on a Sunday, for a sort of *reception*, which he thought himself bound not to refuse to the general desire to see him. This was however very short, and could not, from its nature, be very animated.

It was in the society of his daughter-in-law and grand-children that he was the happiest; he got them about him in all his moments of leisure, and received the caresses of the children with tender delight. Madame de Goethe had almost entirely withdrawn from society, that she might devote all her evenings to her father-in-law, and accompany him in his walks. She read to him, amused him by her original and lively conversation, and nursed him with filial care; she found her reward in

the value he set upon her attentions, and in the perfect confidence he reposed in her. She, too, brought her tribute to the vast spoils with which Goèthe enriched his thoughts.

The progress of foreign literature formed a frequent subject of their conversations; all the time that Goethe did not employ in work and in correspondence, was devoted to reading the most remarkable productions of the day, and to the arrangement of the observations they suggested to him. Equally master of Italian, French, and English, he was *au courant* of all the important works that appeared in the three languages. He was particularly interested in the present stir in French literature, and much gratified by the numerous offerings sent him by the writers of this new school. Though his opinion of their works was not always favourable, he rejoiced to see the national genius take a wider and bolder flight, which

he regarded as the fore-runner of productions of a higher order.

Political works formed a part of his habitual reading, and the last book of this kind he read was, the *Souvenirs de Mirabeau*, by our countryman Dumont. It was the second time of reading; two or three days before his last illness he again expressed the liveliest interest both in the book, and in the various criticisms on it, contained in the French journals*.

We are led here to give an account of a

* We cannot refrain from mentioning another fact, which proves at once the activity of mind of this extraordinary man, and the genuine interest he took in political questions. Dumont's was the last book of this kind that he read; and Salvandy's excellent work on the revolution the last that he wished to read; he thought very highly of the author's talents, and what he had heard of this book had so excited his curiosity and interest, that, during his illness, he asked for it with great earnestness, and was not easy till he got it. Though too weak to begin to read it, he desired that it might be placed in his sight and within his reach.

conversation which we had with him on this subject, both because it is honourable to Dumont, and because it serves as a conclusion to the foregoing details, by showing what was Goethe's opinion on what is called genius, and what the justice he did to all who had contributed directly or indirectly to his own works. The first sheets of Dumont's *Souvenirs* had been communicated to him as early as June, 1830. The opinion he expressed of the work at that time may be more interesting than what fell from him afterwards in conversation. The following is a passage from one of his letters written at the beginning of the same month*.

"What shall I say to you of Dumont's memoirs? I have but few remaining sheets to read, and at all events I will return you the work tomorrow. It is of matchless

* The passage is, of course, translated from the French.—*Transl.*

interest. One is placed at once behind the scenes, and in the *foyer* whence the monster issued forth. We owe the author the liveliest gratitude for putting us in possession of Mirabeau's deepest secrets; the disclosure is made, moreover, by a man eminent both for talent and for benevolence,—as active as he was enlightened. I could fill whole pages in the attempt to express to you both my pleasure and my approbation."

The following day when Goethe sent back the book, he added,

"Receive, once more, my thanks with these sheets. The author's revelations preserve an equal value to the end. I shall pray you, a little while hence, to lend me them again, that I may study them more attentively."

The revolution of July retarded the publication of the work. It was not till twenty months later that the editor was enabled to send him a copy, which was destined to

furnish him with agreeable occupation at the close of his life. During his second perusal of it, towards the end of February, Goethe, irritated at the criticisms of the *Souvenirs*, contained in the French papers, went into the most curious examination of the spirit which dictated these hostile remarks, and of what he considered the real type or character of genius.

We wish we could record all that was remarkable in this conversation, but a part of it was not of a nature to be made public, and the other must necessarily be abridged: we transcribe notes made in our journal the same day.

"I have read," said Goethe, "most of the criticisms of these worthy journalists; they actually thought this an attempt to rob them of all the glory of their Mirabeau, because the author disclosed the secrets of his fecundity, and claimed for others a part of the feathers in which he had decked

himself. What folly! Ought they not to have thanked Dumont for furnishing them with such irrefragable proofs of the genius of the great orator? The French want that Mirabeau should be their Hercules. And they are right:—but a Hercules must be abundantly supplied with food. They forget, good people, that this colossus is composed of parts;—that this demi-god is a collective being. The greatest genius will never be worth much if he pretends to draw exclusively from his own resources. What is genius, but the faculty of seizing and turning to account every thing that strikes us;—of co-ordinating and breathing life into all the materials that present themselves; of taking here marble, there brass, and building a lasting monument with them? If I were not assured that Mirabeau possessed in the highest possible degree the art of appropriating the knowledge and the thoughts of those around him, I should not

believe in the stories told of his influence. The most original young painter, who thinks he owes every thing to his invention, cannot, if he really has genius, come into the room in which we are now sitting, and look round at the drawings with which it is hung, without going out a different man from what he came in, and with a new supply of ideas. What should I be—what would remain to me—if this art of appropriation were considered as derogatory to genius? What have I done? I have collected and turned to account all that I have seen, heard, observed:—I have put in requisition the works of nature and of man. Every one of my writings has been furnished to me by a thousand different persons, a thousand different things—the learned and the ignorant, the wise and the foolish, infancy and age, have come in turn—generally without having the least suspicion of it—to bring me the offering of their thoughts,

their faculties, their experience: often they have sowed the harvest I have reaped; *my work is that of an aggregation of beings taken from the whole of nature;—it bears the name of Goethe**.

"Such was Mirabeau; he had the genius of popular oratory; the genius of observation; the genius of appropriation†; he detected talent wherever it existed,—fostered and reared it to maturity; and talent attached itself to him. He turned every thing to account that he thought useful or apposite, without thinking himself obliged to quote his sources; his principal art was that of setting in motion a vast number of springs. M. Dumont was one of the most efficient;—there is not a page of his book that does not prove the

* I cannot refrain from calling the reader's attention to these remarkable words.—*Transl.*

† *Le génie de la récolte*—a happy phrase, which I cannot venture on in English.—*Transl.*

grandeur, the elevation, of Mirabeau's genius, exactly by the very circumstances of which these journalists so anxiously contest the truth. Absurd people! You do like certain philosophers, countrymen of mine, who fancy that by remaining shut up in their study thirty years, without once looking into the world, and exclusively occupied in sifting and bolting the ideas extracted from their own poor brains, they shall find an exhaustless spring of original, grand, and useful conceptions! Do you know what comes out?—clouds; nothing but clouds! I was foolish enough to vex myself so long about all these absurdities, that I may be allowed now, in my old days, to amuse myself, and laugh at them."

This is a specimen of what Goethe was in intimate conversation. We could give many more; but it would be wandering from our aim. When the subject was not of a serious kind, his repartees had always

something unexpected and pointed and brilliant about them: *bon mots* fell in abundance from his lips; it is pity nobody has tried to collect them. Here are a few, addressed to the author of this article*.

The latter was one day criticising a little bronze model of Michel Angelo's statue of Moses, and among other things remarked that the arms of the great lawgiver were of disproportionate length. As the fine arts were not the subject upon which he had any right to give an opinion, Goethe exclaimed with great vivacity, "Do you take Michel Angelo for a fool? Had not Moses to carry the tables of the ten commandments? Do you think, too, he would have been able to hold fast in his embrace the whole Hebrew nation if he had had such arms as yours—you court-people, who set up to criticise

* The English reader will recollect that these *bon mots* must be read with allowance for the dilution they have received from two translations.—*Transl.*

Michel Angelo?" Another time the conversation fell on the reigning fashions in the society around him;—no more meetings for the mere pleasure of conversing; or for bringing young people together to enjoy amusements suited to their age; a great many balls, it is true,—but besides these, eternal *routs*, in which beauty in all her freshness discussed with almost beardless youth the learned rules of whist or boston. Goethe regarded this sort of amusement almost with horror; but suddenly taking up the defence of it against us, he exclaimed, "Respect their games; this is a conventional order established on the ruins of public order. Now that people amuse themselves with upsetting thrones, it is quite fair that they should manifest the love of submission inherent in us all, by accepting the chains of the king of diamonds."

"Nature," said he another time, speaking

of theoretical men, " is like a coquette endowed with immortal youth and beauty; she invites us by continual *agacéries,* encourages us by her advances, but the moment we think we are sure of her, she escapes from our arms, and leaves a shadow in our embrace."

Such, at eighty-three, was the conversation of the man whom some writers were pleased to pity for outliving his glory. So completely were they mistaken in their judgment, that his friends had remarked, on the contrary, a decided return of intellectual vigour and activity since the alarming illness which, in 1823, brought him to the verge of the grave. He had no longer the bodily strength of his manhood, nor the same power of undergoing fatigue, and he had outlived those ties of heart and head which bound him to so many great men who were no more. But his mind remained acute, observant, creative to the end;—its

activity stopped only at the point where his physical strength failed him, and this was as great as it could be at his age. No—Goethe had not that most painful warning of approaching dissolution—the feeling of a decline in his faculties: he inferred its approach only from the number of his years, and from the melancholy chasms left around him.

It has been truly remarked that he avoided conversation on painful or agitating subjects; but this did not arise from feebleness or pusillanimity; it was the result of reflection, and of the highest degree of self-knowledge. Intensely susceptible, as we have remarked, to all impressions; subjugated by any new and striking ideas, he had above any man to dread those which might have turned him aside from his track, and given up his immense imagination to uncurbed wanderings. Nor did he like people to dwell, in his presence, on gloomy

thoughts or lamentable occurrences, unless some practical end was to be answered by such conversation*. It was for this reason that he avoided the common gossip of society; and that those around him took care not to fatigue his ears with sinister rumours of political troubles, cholera, or other disasters. But we heard him question M. Walter, physician to the Queen of Bavaria†, in the greatest detail concerning this terrible malady, and collect all the most

* These words might have been written for Mr. Bentham, who, like Goethe, resolutely kept at a distance all painful subjects from which no practical good was to be extracted—a precaution from which acute sensibility and intense sympathy may generally be inferred. Persons so constituted, if they are reflecting and energetic, learn to guard themselves on the side which nature has left exposed to severe and disabling wounds. Men of coarse minds and blunt sympathies, on the contrary, seek the excitement of horrors.—*Transl.*

† I transcribe this name as the author writes it, though I presume he means *Herr von Walther*, formerly of Bonn, who is known by reputation throughout Europe.—*Transl.*

alarming facts from this most authentic source. In this case he was sure of being rewarded by valuable information for enduring a painful subject; he was sure of hearing nothing but what was interesting and reasonable, and he took advantage of such an opportunity.

It was the same with thoughts of death; he neither forgot his age, nor the necessity of yielding to the universal law; he only calculated the chances which still remained to him of life and enjoyment, and the means he might employ for increasing them; among the foremost of which he placed care in keeping at a distance all gloomy thoughts, all exaggerated anxiety; as well as constant exercise of the intellectual faculties to preserve them from torpor and decay. When an irreparable calamity overtook him, he compelled himself to neutralize the pernicious effects of long regrets by zealous application to study. There

were moments when, to a superficial observer, he might have appeared insensible, whilst the most painful conflict agitated his soul. In such a case you might be almost certain to guess what was passing within, by taking the very contrary of his conversation: thus he related one anecdote after another with excessive vivacity, at a time when all his thoughts were concentrated on one point.

The death of the Grand Duchess Luise, which happened in February, 1830, at first caused a sort of reaction in him which was characteristic; but it led him more than was usual to the thought that a similar fate was at hand for him; he spoke to his friends several times of his death, and of the means of warding it off to a remote age; "Yes," said he, "we can make head against him for some time as yet; as long as one creates there is no room for dying; but yet, the night, the great night, will come, in which

no man shall work*." He used to call that solemn hour, "*the undetermined hour*."

The same year had not completed its course when he had the grief of losing his only son. He now thought it his duty to resume the management of his property, to return to active life, and especially to set all his affairs in order, that he might place his daughter-in-law and grandchildren in a state of security. From that time he no longer repulsed the image of death as a spectre which it was disagreeable and useless to call up; he often spoke of it in the most distinct manner, and above all turned his attention to the drawing up of a will, in which every provision was made in the greatest detail, as to his fortune, his collections, and his manuscripts. We shall not specify the clauses here; we must only assure our rea-

* Noch ist es Tag, da rühre sich der Mann,
Die Nacht bricht ein, wo niemand wirken kann.

Motto to Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre.—*Transl.*

ders that the details with which newspapers were filled were utterly erroneous.

Having once secured complete tranquillity on this head, Goethe resumed his usual habits, and hastened to put the last hand to his unpublished works; either to publish them himself, if heaven should grant him two or three years more of life, or to put them in a condition to be entrusted to an editor, without burthening him with the responsibility of the corrections. He began with the most pressing. The second part of Faust was not finished; Helena, which forms the third act, had been composed more than thirty years before, with the exception of the end, which is much more recent, and which certainly does not go back further than 1825. The two preceding acts had just been finished—there remained the two last. Goethe composed the fifth act first; then, but a few weeks before his death, he crowned his work by

the fourth. This broken manner of working was, perhaps, not always his; but it is explained in this case by the care he took to conceive his plan entire before he began to execute it; to reflect upon it, sometimes for a long series of years, and to work out sometimes one part, sometimes another, according to the inspiration of the moment. He reserved to himself the power of binding together these separate members in a final redaction—of bringing them together by the necessary transitions, and of throwing out all that might injure the integrity of the poem. Thus it happens that in the manuscripts relating to Faust there are found a great number of poems written at different periods, which could not find place in the drama, but which we hope may be published in the miscellaneous works.

We come reluctantly to the fatal term. What we have said may suffice to paint the man, such as he was during the last ten

years of his life. We could easily gather from the stores of our memory details enough to double the volume of this article; we should be glad to postpone the moment in which we must speak of his death; but space fails us, and we must enter on this sad but inevitable subject.

A few days before his last illness—it was on a Sunday—Goethe was occupied in looking over his drawings, when M. Coudray came in. "You see me employed," said the venerable man, "in looking over my productions, that I may throw out those which are not worth preserving." After warmly protesting against this project, M. Coudray obtained permission to see once more this interesting collection, and paused with peculiar delight over a landscape in which the sun was setting. "Yes," said Goethe, with a sort of prophetic inspiration, "he is grand and majestic even at the moment of his disappearance."

The following Thursday he received the accustomed weekly visit of the grand duchess, on which he set a very high value. Never was his conversation so brilliant, so lively, so varied; it was so full of matter, so interesting, that it was prolonged beyond the usual time, and the animation with which the visit had inspired him was still visible during his dinner. Mr. Meyer dined with him: Goethe's oldest Weimar friend was his last guest. The evening of the same day he exhibited traces of irritation,—precursors of his fatal illness. The next morning his symptoms were so alarming that his physician thought it right to send a bulletin to the palace. Transient appearances of amendment awakened some slight hopes, but the disease soon took a form which announced the approaching catastrophe. The fever assumed a nervous character—paralysis of the lungs was imminent, and it was impossible for his attendants to disguise

from themselves the powerlessness of art over a frame enfeebled by extreme age, and worn out by other serious maladies.

We shall not present our readers with the circumstantial details of his last moments; they will find all that can be said on the subject in a paper by Dr. Müller, to whom M. Coudray communicated the notes he made from his own personal observation. We shall only say that, in the midst of suffering and of some passing dreamy wanderings of mind, Goethe remained himself. It was still the sun, though setting. He repeatedly astonished those around him by the activity of his mind, by his return to reading and occupation whenever he felt himself at all better, by his felicitous and profound remarks. Though no one was permitted to enter his room, except his daughter-in-law, the children, and the physician, he kept up his communication with the world without, occupying himself with

things which had interested the grand duchess; enquiring with a sort of solicitude about friends whom he regretted he could not receive, but whom he loved to know in the house; showing the greatest tenderness for his grandchildren and their mother, whose indefatigable cares soothed his last moments. The name of Ottilia wandered over his lips when he thought she was not at his side. During the six days of his short but fatal illness, he betrayed no symptom of anxiety as to its possible termination; once only he seemed to fear being threatened with a vomiting of blood, and desired that, if it came on, they would not hesitate to bleed him. But all his conversation showed that if he thought himself dying, he did not fear death. Faithful to his principles, he constantly occupied himself, that he might not give the thinking faculty time to grow dull and inactive. Even when he had lost the power of speaking, his hand preserved the

character of his life; his voice was mute, but he traced characters in the air;—and when his hand sank slowly on his knee, the radiant star had sunk beneath our horizon*.

It is needless to speak of the effect of Goethe's death on all classes of society, nor the intense interest evinced by all the people of Weimar during his illness. Up to his latest moment he continued to receive from the ducal family proofs of the affection which had bound him to their predecessors.

Just before he expired the grand duke was in the house, and expressed a strong desire to be allowed to see him once more, and

* Chancellor von Müller writes to me, "Goethe died the most blessed death that man can die—conscious, cheerful to the last breath—perfectly painless. It was an universal gentle sinking and going out of the flame of life;—harmonious, without struggle. 'Light' was his last request. Half an hour before the end he said, 'Open the shutters that more light may come into the room.' These were his last words—prophetic, like his life."—(Extract from a Letter addressed to Prince Pückler-Muskau, to whom I am indebted for it.)—*Transl.*

to speak some last words of love and consolation to him. A few moments afterwards Dr. Eckermann quoted to the friends assembled in the adjoining room the two last lines of Faust,

"Es kann die Spur von meinen Erdetagen
Nicht in Æonen untergehn*."

At that moment Goethe breathed his last.

His funeral, which was described in all the public papers, was such as befitted his station and his fame. The grand duke gave immediate orders for the execution of his predecessor's desire. The remains of the great poet were deposited in the royal vault, by the side of the master and of the friend he loved so well—Karl-August and Schiller.

"In death they were not divided."

It cannot be denied that with Goethe fell the last pillar of that temple of glory which

* The traces of my earthly days
Cannot be lost in the depth of ages.

conferred on Weimar a privilege unique among the cities of Germany;—but the documents of that privilege are still there; and though its great men are no more, it can never be forgotten that they were called to this asylum of liberal and lofty thought; — that, like nightingales, they nestled in the thicket where they found food and shelter, and could pour forth their songs free and unmolested. Goethe, Schiller, Herder, and Wieland, are gone—ages will pass before their equals will reappear on earth. Men of like genius indeed do not return; but others spring up wherever the soil is favourable to their growth. Generations pass and change—the true greatness of a state is to understand and supply the demands of the age. Weimar stood at the summit of literary glory, at a time when literature was of the highest social interest*.

* We may perhaps be permitted to ask, when is it not?—if social interests were understood. Wherever

It is the boast of the present day to diffuse light through all classes; to encourage art and industry; to search after practical and useful truths. In this career, too, Weimar has stood foremost. In a country of small extent, and few large fortunes, the rulers vie with their subjects in encouraging every useful and liberal institution. Every thing is done to ameliorate the lot of the many, to enlighten their understandings, and to attach them to ideas of order, beneficence, and improvement.

men read, literature must have much to do in forming their tastes, opinions, desires, antipathies, in short, their whole inward being. What might not a truly enlightened, humane, and attractive literature, diffused among an instructed people, effect?—*Transl.*

NOTES.

NOTE 1.

THE poem referred to in the text is among the Elegies written at Rome.

Klein ist unter den Fürsten Germaniens freilich der meine; [vermag.
Kurz und schmal ist sein Land, mässig nur, was er
Aber so wende nach innen, so wende nach aussen die Kräfte [seyn.
Jeder; da wär's ein Fest, Deutscher mit Deutschen zu
Doch was priesest du Ihn, den Thaten und Werke verkünden?
Und bestochen erschien deine Verehrung vielleicht;
Denn mir hat er gegeben, was Grosse selten gewähren, [Haus.
Neigung, Musse, Vertraun, Felder und Garten und
Niemand braucht' ich zu danken als ihm, und Manches bedurft' ich, [verstand.
Der ich mich auf den Erwerb schlecht, als ein Dichter,
Hat mich Europa gelobt, was hat mir Europa gegeben?
Nichts! Ich habe, wie schwer! meine Gedichte bezahlt.

Deutschland ahmte mich nach, und Frankreich mochte
mich lesen. [Gast.
England! freundlich empfingst du den zerrütteten
Doch was fördert es mich, das auch sogar der Chinese
Mahlet, mit ängstlicher Hand, Werthern und Lotten'
auf Glas?
Niemals frug ein Kaiser nach mir, es hat sich kein
König [Mäcen.
Um mich bekümmert, und er war mir August und

Mr. William Taylor (vol. iii. p. 361) says, "I have found difficulty in reducing the following poem into hexameter and pentameter lines; but a work of the heart may not be maimed for metrical purposes, and therefore I give it in word-for-word prose."

In adopting Mr. Taylor's translation I have ventured to make one or two slight alterations, which seemed to me to bring it still nearer to the original.

Petty among the German princes is certainly my prince,
Short and narrow his land, limited what he can do;
But were every one so to employ inwards and outwards
his forces, [mans.
Great would be the joy to be a German among Ger-
Yet why dost thou praise him, whom deeds and works
proclaim,
When thy veneration may perhaps seem hired?

For he has given to me, what the great seldom bestow,
Affection, leisure, confidence, fields, garden, and house.
No one have I needed to thank but him; and much have I wanted,
I, who, as a poet, ill understood the arts of gain.
If Europe has praised me, what has Europe done for me?
Nothing. Even my poems have been an expense to me.
Germany imitated me. France was pleased to read me.
England received friendlily the harrassed guest.
But what avails it to me, that even the Chinese
Enamels with anxious hand Werter and Charlotte's love?
No emperor asked about me; no king has troubled
Himself for me: he has been to me both Augustus and Mæcenas.

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Note 2.

I cannot refrain from extracting a short account of this singular and touching festival, from a book published at the time. It is characteristic not only of the reverence for intellectual rank, but of the attachment to primitive customs, for which Germany is remarkable. Family festivals are observed with a sort of sanctity, and, as I have mentioned in a note, the most remarkable among these are the *Silberne* and the *Goldne Hochzeit*; *i. e.* the twenty-fifth and fiftieth anniversaries of marriage.

The festival in question was thus called *Goethe's Goldner Jubeltag*, the title of the little work from which I extract these few particulars.

"On the morning of the 7th of November, 1825, at dawn of day, when Goethe opened the shutters of his bed-room, the first sound that met his ears was a morning song, sung by voices concealed in his garden. His first glance fell on the various elegant and tasteful gifts of neat-handed friends. At half-past eight all the carriages in the town were in motion; all persons of consideration in court and city were in pilgrimage to the poet's house. A party of musicians, and fourteen female friends, had assembled in his *salon* to perform a morning

ode, written by Professor Riemer, and set to music by Eberwein. At nine, when Goethe was conducted from his study by a friend and his own son, the crowd in every room was so great that they were obliged to lead him in unobserved by a side entrance. Scarcely was that honoured head beheld, when the music began, and heightened the emotion which beamed from all eyes.

"The nymphs of the Ilm greeted the golden day of their faithful poet, and sang his immortality. When that admirable singer, Madame Eberwein, uttered the words,

'Heil mir! ich darf Ihn stolz den Meinen nennen,
Mich als die Seine dankesvoll bekennen!'

the whole throng of auditors were deeply affected. The tones melted away amid solemn silence. With modest dignity the venerable man turned to his friends, and expressed his thanks by eloquent pressure of the hand, and affectionate words.

"Baron von Fritsch then stepped forward, and delivered to him the autograph letter of the duke* and the gold medal which he had secretly ordered to be struck at Berlin.

"Goethe, who expected some memorial worthy

* See page 109.

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of the giver, held both for some time in his hand unopened, in affectionate emotion.

" The deputations from the University of Jena, from the Courts of Justice of Weimar and Eisenach, from the Town Council, and the Lodge of Freemasons, now came forward, bringing greetings and worthy offerings. The University presented him, through its eloquent organ Dr. Eichstädt, with a latin poetical address.

" The faculties of Medicine and Philosophy offered him appropriate diplomas of the degree of Doctor. The faculty of Theology presented an admirably expressed congratulatory diploma *, with a most elegant address. The faculty of Law sent an address, and expressed its regret that the University of Strasburg had anticipated their offering of the doctorial dignity fifty-four years before. The whole body of students addressed Goethe through the mouths of two deputies. The bürgermeister, in the name of the town council of Weimar, made an excellent speech, accompanying the presentation of an honourable document, by which Goethe's son, his two grandsons Walther and Wolfgang, and all his heirs male for ever, were presented with the rights of a citizen of Weimar;

'that the honoured name of GOETHE might remain for ever as the highest ornament of its archives.'

"Among the numberless offerings of fair hands we can only mention a large and beautiful portfolio of white silk, embroidered by his daughter-in-law with exquisite bouquets of roses, and destined to enclose the grand duke's letter; and a porcelain vase, on one side of which was painted Tasso's house at Sorrento, with the beautiful back-ground of the sea and coast; on the other, the preparation for the sacrifice of Iphigenia, after the antient painting at Pompeii, with appropriate inscriptions. Between these were two small medallions, in one a pen, and around it a serpent, the emblem of eternity, enclosing the words 'Iphigenie und Tasso;' in the other seven books, and the motto

'Exegit monumentum ære perennius.'

This elegant work of art was the gift of an English family (Bracebridge) who, after a long residence in Italy, have lately taken up their abode at Weimar, and are enthusiastically devoted to Goethe.

"Shortly after ten the grand duke and grand duchess came to offer their congratulations in person. The exalted couple remained for full an hour with him alone, when the hereditary grand duke

and grand duchess, with the two princesses their daughters, also visited him. Meanwhile the ministers of state, the chiefs of the courts of justice, the most distinguished persons of the court, the deputations of the university and the town council, the members of the higher consistory, the head masters of the high schools, and all the persons belonging to Goethe's department in the state, as head of all establishments for the promotion of art and science, collected together; while the principal ladies of Weimar, among whom were the daughters and grand-daughters of Wieland and Herder, assembled in an upper room.

"As soon as all those invited were met, the gentlemen were conducted two and two by Professor Riemer, the librarian, into the great room, in which were placed the statue of the grand duke, as large as life, and Rauch's bust of Goethe on a handsome pedestal, with a laurel crown beside it. Just as the procession reached the centre of the hall, music was heard from the galleries. The words were by Chancellor von Müller, and the music by Hummel. The effect of this invisible harmony in the lofty and beautiful hall, decorated with the busts and portraits of the ancestors of our princes, and the great men of art and science, is indescribable.

"Chancellor von Müller, with whom was Goethe's great nephew, Alfred Nicolovius, then presented a curious letter from Goethe's parents to their friend Schönborn, Danish Consul at Algiers, which by a strange series of accidents had fallen into the hands of Herr Perthes of Gotha. With his consent, Nicolovius presented it to the grand-ducal library, where it is now preserved*."

After describing other solemnities, the author continues, "meanwhile Goethe had had time to relish his happiness. After his exalted guests had quitted him, he examined all his presents, and grouped and disposed them so as fully to enjoy their beauty, thus forming a sort of poetical composition, or original festive garland." Here follows a description of all the elegant works of Goethe's fair friends and admirers.

"At two o'clock upwards of two hundred persons of both sexes had assembled in the great hall of the Stadthaus at dinner." Next comes a description of the beautiful and appropriate decorations of the hall, which referred chiefly to Goethe's works; the toasts, the music composed for the occasion by Hummel, Zelter, *&c.* and other details for which I have not room.

* See page 117.

Goethe's health was given by Baron von Gersdorf in the following words:

"To the great name we are met to celebrate. To GOETHE! To him whom, so long as art and science shall afford the highest exercise for the human mind, the remotest ages will regard as two-fold conqueror,—*to our Goethe!*"

Geheime-Kammerrath von Goethe returned thanks for his father, and proposed the health of Herr von Knebel, the last I believe of Goethe's early friends who is still alive.

"*Iphigenie* had long been in secret preparation at the duke's desire, and the company now repaired to the court theatre to witness the performance.

"To the last moment there was an anxious doubt whether the excitement and agitation of the day would permit Goethe to be present. When, therefore, some persons in the pit suddenly descried him in the half-concealed box which had been prepared for him, the joyful shout, 'He is there,' ran like an electric shock through the house. After the burst of applause had subsided, this noble tragedy was represented in a manner worthy of it. The celebrated Madame Jagemann acted Iphigenie. Her performance of this part has always been spoken of as the highest triumph of art.

"At the end of the third act Goethe warned by his friendly physician, retired; and now a beautiful conclusion to this extraordinary day awaited him. A serenade was performed in front of his house by the orchestral band and choir of the grand-ducal chapel. Hummel had with great feeling and taste combined the triumphal march in Titus, Gluck's Overture to Iphigenie, and a masterly adagio of his own, with an echo for horns. The opening expressed the triumphant glories of the day, while the melting tones of the adagio seemed to invite to the tranquillity which follows the consciousness of work accomplished, and to sweet dreams of life enjoyed. These were beautifully expressed by Dr. Eckermann at the moment the music paused, in the words "*So traume fort*" (Dream on, then).

"All the houses in the Frauenplatz, where Goethe lived, as well as many in other parts, were spontaneously illuminated. A numerous company now repaired to Goethe's house, where an elegant entertainment was prepared, and the hero of the day remained an hour among his happy guests.

" Among the tributes sent from a distance, the most remarkable was an epithalamium written by himself fifty years before, for two young friends, which had arrived, unfortunately, too late. The

worthy couple, both in the enjoyment of unbroken health and cheerfulness, had just celebrated their golden marriage feast, and had thus seen the poet's early wishes for them realized. By this agreeable surprise he was transported back to the days of his youth.

"The day was celebrated at Leipsig, and in other towns of Germany; and wherever Goethe's genius was remembered, the prince who secured to him the leisure which had brought forth so rich a harvest, claimed the grateful affection of all Germans. At Frankfurt, Consul-general von Bethman marked the day by placing in his museum a statue of Goethe as large as life, which he had commissioned Rauch to execute for him.

"For weeks afterwards scarcely a day elapsed without some token of sympathy and veneration; and thus the 'pleasantly burthensome debt of gratitude,' which Goethe so beautifully acknowledged, received constant accessions."

I have abridged this curious statement as much as possible, and I hope have not exhausted the patience of the reader. By much the larger part of the volume consists of the poems and documents referred to in the narrative. From these I have selected the autograph letter of the grand duke,

and the address and diploma of the theological faculty of Jena (which appeared to me the most remarkable and elegant of the three).

I should gladly insert all the replies of Goethe to the senate and faculties, for they are very characteristic, but as I am afraid of extending this note beyond all reasonable bounds, I have taken only one.

HANDSCHREIBEN
SR. KÖNIGL. HOHEIT DES GROSSHERZOGS
an den Herrn Staatsminister
VON GOETHE.

Sehr werthgeschätzter Herr Geheimer Rath und Staatsminister!

Gewiss betrachte Ich mit vollem Recht den Tag, wo Sie, Meiner Einladung folgend, in Weimar eintrafen, als den Tag des wirklichen Eintritts in Meinen Dienst; da Sie von jenem Zeitpunkte an nicht aufgehört haben, Mir die erfreulichsten Beweise der treuesten Anhänglichkeit und Freundschaft durch Widmung Ihrer seltenen Talente zu geben. Die funfzigste Wiederkehr dieses Tages erkenne Ich sonach mit dem lebhaftesten Vergnügen als das Dienst-Jubelfest Meines ersten Staatsdieners, des Jugendfreundes, der mit unveränderter Treue, Neigung und Beständigkeit Mich bis hieher

in allen Wechselfällen des Lebens begleitet hat, dessen umsichtigem Rath, dessen lebendiger Theilnahme und stets wohlgefälligen Dienstleistung Ich den glücklichen Erfolg der wichtigsten Unternehmungen verdanke und den für immer gewonnen zu haben, Ich als eine der höchsten Zierden Meiner Regierung achte. Des heutigen Jubelfestes frohe Veranlassung gern benutzend, um Ihnen diese Gesinnungen auszudrücken, bitte Ich der Unveränderlichkeit derselben Sich versichert zu halten.

Weimar, 7 November, 1825.

KARL-AUGUST.

NACHSCHRIFT.

Auch ein minder vergängliches Zeichen soll, sehr werthgeschätzter Herr Geheimer Rath und Staatsminister, das seltene und mir besonders erfreuliche Jubelfest der Mit-und Nachwelt verkündigen: in solcher Absicht ist mit Einverständniss meiner Gemahlin die anliegende Denkmünze geprägt worden. Empfangen Sie durch deren Widmung ein dauerndes Denkmal Unserer Gesinnungen und gleichzeitig die wiederholten aufrichtigsten Wünsche für die Fortdauer Ihres Wohlbefindens.

KARL-AUGUST.

AUTOGRAPH LETTER of his Royal Highness the GRAND DUKE to Minister of State von Goethe.

Very highly-valued Sir, Privy Counsellor, and Minister of State,

I regard the day on which, in compliance with my invitation, you came to Weimar, as the day of your real entrance into my service; and certainly with the greatest reason; since from that moment you have never ceased to give me the most gratifying proofs of the truest attachment and friendship, by the devotion of your rare talents to my interests. I hail the fiftieth return of that day therefore with the liveliest pleasure, as the jubilee festival of the service of my highest officer of state,—the friend of my youth, who, with unchanging truth, affection, and constancy, has borne me company in all the changes and chances of life up to this hour; to whose wise counsels, lively sympathy, and ever ready service I owe the happy results of the most important undertakings, and which to have won for ever I regard as one of the highest glories of my reign. Gladly availing myself of the joyful occasion afforded me by this jubilee for expressing to you these my sentiments,

I beg you to hold yourself assured of their unalterableness.

KARL-AUGUST.

Weimar, 7th Nov. 1825.

POSTSCRIPT.

It is fit, most valued Counsellor and Minister, that a less perishable token should remain as witness to cotemporaries and posterity of this rare and, to me, singularly joyful festival. With this view, and with the concurrence of my wife*, the accompanying medal has been struck. Accept it as a lasting memorial of our sentiments towards you, and with it the renewed and sincerest wishes for the continuance of your health and welfare.

KARL-AUGUST.

* We have no word equivalent to *Gemahlin*, which, by usage, is a degree more dignified than wife, and yet not, like consort, exclusively applied to royal persons. All well-bred persons in speaking of the husband or wife of a lady or gentleman they are addressing, say "*Ihre Herr Gemahl, Ihre Frau Gemahlin.*" I could not bring myself to spoil the beautiful simplicity of this letter by the word *consort*.

ADDRESS and DIPLOMA of the THEOLOGICAL FACULTY of JENA.

Most Excellent Sir, *&c.*

The Theological Faculty, though restricted by its statutes and its forms within the limits of ecclesiastical learning and business, would not be behind the other faculties of the University in the public expression of its veneration for your Excellency, nor refuse itself the satisfaction of publicly acknowledging how gladly, both as a learned and as a protestant body, it would co-operate in all labours for the general extension of knowledge and of invention, and how intimately and essentially it regards such labours as connected with its station and calling.

Your Excellency has not only often elevated our peculiar branch of knowledge, and the principles on which it rests, by profound, enlightened, and awakening remarks, but, as creator of a new spirit in science and in life, and as lord of the domain of free and vigorous thought, has powerfully promoted the true interests of the church and of evangelical theology.

Receive, Sir, the expression of our reverence

and gratitude, in the document which we venture to lay before you, and which we hope may descend to posterity as an expression of our sentiments: as a testimony to future ages of your Excellency's merits, it will not be needed; *they* are eternal, as the empire of reason and of morality.

We make bold to attach some importance to the form of the public expression of our sentiments; it has never been employed before, and will remain single and alone.

With profound and entire participation in the wishes of the whole of Germany, we have the honour respectfully to subscribe ourselves

Your Excellency's most obedient

LUDWIG FRIEDRICH OTTO BAUMGARTEN CRUSIUS,
Dean of the Faculty of Theology.

And others.

Q. B. F. F. Q. S.

IOAN. VOLG. GOETHIO
ARTIUM GERMANIAE LITERARUMQUE
PRINCIPI ATQUE PRAESIDIO
GRANDI AEQUALIUM ET PERPETUO DECORI
IN SOLEMNIBUS SEMISECULARIBUS
DOMICILII IN TERRIS VIMARIENSIBUS POSITI
ET INTER PIA CIVIUM VOTA
ORDO THEOLOGORUM
ACADEMIAE IENENSIS
AD SE RATUS ATTINERE
ET AD ECCLESIAM EVANGELICAM
QUAE
COMMUNEM PATRIAE GLORIAM QUAE OPTIMAS
LITERAS
QUAE MENTIS VIM LIBERTATEMQUE AUGEANT
SUAQUE DUCENS
QUAE DE SACRIS ILLE ET THEOLOGICIS LITERIS
INGENIOSUS AESTIMATOR PLACIDUS CULTOR
MITIS ET SOLERS DUCTOR
AETERNIS SCRIPTIS CONDIDERIT
GRATUM ANIMUM ET PIUM TESTATUS
PUBLICUM EIUS HOC MONUMENTUM
EXSTARE VOLUIT.

IENAE, D. VII. NOV. cIↃIↃccccxxv.

(L. S.)

To the Honourable Faculty of Theology of the University of Jena.

While I consider and prize the great happiness which I have been permitted to enjoy from so many sources, I am peculiarly sensible to the kindness shown me by the corporations and learned bodies of the country.

Among them the testimony of the venerable Theological Faculty is especially valuable to me. In the most appropriate and peculiar form it reveals a glance over the whole of the Present and the Past; and what I have tried to achieve, you do me the favour to accept as accomplished.

The approbation bestowed on my labours by such judges, occupying so distinguished a station, must animate me with grateful delight, and hallow the wish, that what it is still granted me to do may ever appear consonant with those sentiments which have received the sanction of such excellent, right-thinking men.

With equal gratitude and respect I subscribe myself

J. W. v. Goethe.

Nov. 24.

Schönborn (see page 104) was removed from Algiers and attached to the Danish embassy in London, where he lived thirty years, and returned to Germany at an advanced age. He brought home chests of books and papers from England, some of which had travelled with him from Africa, and had never been opened. At his death, among many curious things, was found this letter from Goethe's parents. It is impossible to give an idea of the *naiveté* of the style, interspersed with colloquial and provincial expressions.

Frankfurt on the Maine, July 24, 1776.

Your kind letter to our son, dated Algiers, October 28, 1775, wherein you give a succinct description of the Spanish *coup manqué*, came duly to hand about six weeks after date; and it is no fault of his that it has remained up to this time unanswered. He had already left us, and we were obliged to send it after him to Weimar, where he is now living. And now listen how all this came to pass; for all that concerns this singular being will be interesting to you, valued friend. I shall begin from the origin of his present connection. It is two years ago since the Duke of Weimar became acquainted with him on the favourable side, and as he passed through Frankfurt, on his way from Durlach, whither he

had gone to be married to the Princess Luise of Darmstadt, my son was invited in due form by the young couple to Weimar, and followed them soon after. He passed last winter there as visitor, and entertained the great people with readings out of his unprinted works; introduced skating and sledge parties, and other good tastes, whereby he made both them and many persons of rank and figure in the neighbourhood his friends. The more, however, the duke grew acquainted with the doctor, the less could he do without him; he therefore made sufficient trial of his gifts, which he found of such a sort that he named him at last his privy counsellor of legation, with seat and voice in the privy council, and a salary of twelve hundred thalers. So now there sits the poet, and acquits himself in his new office in the best manner that can be: and there we will let him sit; but, in consideration of his present employments, we must let him off from this correspondence and undertake it in his stead. We will let you know every thing new that happens to him, and send you his little writings, of which the beginning was made. One thing more: as the Duke of Weimar not only values learning but rewards it according to its deserts, his capital will very likely become the meeting-place of many wits and learned men; for instance,

one of the Counts von Stolberg is appointed chamberlain, and will soon be there. Herder is going to enter on the office of superintendant-general, and Lenz has also been there for some months. But what will surprise you the most is that the doctor has made it up with Wieland, and is now living with him on the friendliest footing. And that is from his heart.

As for Hofrath Schlosser, of Emmeding, he is over head and ears in printing and publishing matters not altogether to the taste of the dogmatic theologians there; for these black gentlemen with white collars don't find the second part of his catechism for country parishes (*Landkatechismus*) shaped after their fashion, and therefore they are urging on the secular arm to a confiscation. He has just brought out his *Anti-pope*. In the *Ephemeriden der Menschheit*, a work which is published at Basel, are several essays of his, *&c.*

Hactenus GOETHE PATER.

Dear, good friend, you must hearken to a word from me too; know then that I am alive, often and often think of you, want sadly to know what our friend Schönborn is about in Algiers, and so forth. You remember, don't you, that near three years are flown since we were so happy together, eating

grapes. I should think you have been long enough in Barbary by this time—have seen people in veils and turbans long enough; and therefore the counsel my friendly heart gives you is this—come back to us soon. It was always a vast delight to me to have great men about me and near me; but in my present situation (both my children being far, far away) it is heaven. Now follow my advice, and come—the sooner the better—it will do you good. What we *shall* have to tell one another! We need not fear that the time will hang heavy on our hands. I have got a mine of anecdotes, stories, and the like, so that I hereby bind myself to prate for eight days without stop;—and if *you* would but begin—all about seas and lakes, cities and villages, men and monsters, elephants and serpents,—that would be a *gaudium**! Fare you well! So wishes your most true and peculiar friend,

KATHERINE E. GOETHE.

* This is the word in the original.—*Transl.*

MEMOIR

OF

THE GRAND DUKE KARL-AUGUST

OF SACHSEN-WEIMAR EISENACH.

FROM THE GERMAN OF

CHANCELLOR VON MÜLLER.

Eulogies on princes are generally tedious and suspicious; and in spite of the indissoluble historical connection between Goethe and the man to whom he owed his undisturbed leisure, and his freedom from that most oppressive bondage to a man of genius, the necessity of writing for popularity, I should have hesitated to insert this tribute of a subject's attachment, had not all the most important facts it contains received a singular and unlooked-for confirmation. While I was translating it I received from Paris M. Victor Cousin's first official Report of the state of public instruction in some parts of Germany, whither he was sent by the department of government to which he belongs (the *Bureau d'Instruction Publique*). This first report includes Ducal and Royal Saxony*.

This official and foreign document corroborates to a degree hardly to be expected the statements of Chancellor von Müller.

It appears that the traces of the enlightened benevolence of Karl-August, and his admirable mother (to

* The second, which I have since received, is devoted entirely to Prussia, and forms the noblest eulogy on the government of that country.

whom indeed, as to the first source, all ought to be referred), are scattered throughout the land;—scattered I ought not to say—rather, indelibly graven.

As Minister of Public Instruction, which, as we have seen, included the drama, the fine arts, all in short that could contribute to humanize and refine a people, Goethe must be regarded as the grand moving principle in this career of improvement. Few men, however, have shared with him the felicity of seeing the hand of power lend itself with eagerness and efficiency to the execution of such projects.

MEMOIR

OF

THE GRAND DUKE KARL-AUGUST.

To the Illustrious Memory of his Royal Highness the Most Noble Prince and Lord, KARL-AUGUST, Grand Duke of Sachsen-Weimar Eisenach.

WHEN a great and glorious life is closed; it becomes at once our sacred duty and highest consolation to make its high significancy and its beneficent effects distinctly present to our minds; thankfully to mark how God's grace bestowed them, and with pious care to engrave such a picture of the Departed on our souls as may abide there for ever.

How much more, when it was the life of

our prince—the father of his land and ours; a life that, from its earliest dawn, lightened upon us like a genial sun, sending forth light and warmth in all directions through long years of activity, diffusing blessings far beyond the boundaries of his own country;—when it was the life of a prince who conceived as justly as he conscientiously fulfilled the duties of his high calling;—at once intrepid and indefatigable, mild and wise;—who did good to countless multitudes;—of whom it is impossible to decide whether he were greater as a man, or as a ruler.

A short and simple statement of his actions will suffice to recall the career of one whose whole life was action, and whose fairest monument has long been raised in all hearts.

Sprung from illustrious ancestors, greeted with double joy as the hope of an almost extinct line, the infant ruler was left by the

early death of his father to the care of his incomparable mother. He was trained by the illustrious men she selected — Hermann, Wieland, and Count Görz—to personal sacrifice, to unprejudiced exertion of the judgment, and to love for art and science. Early formed to all the higher and fairer virtues of humanity, in his fourteenth year he won from the Great Frederic the declaration, that "he had never seen a young man of his age who inspired such hopes." With the fullest confidence could the Regent-Mother, Amalie, deliver up to him the reins of government on the day in which he completed his eighteenth year.

A few weeks afterwards his union with Princess Luise of Hessen-Darmstadt took place;—a union of truly equal souls, so rich in noble fruits, in thousandfold blessings on the land; so ennobled by interchange of thoughts, by devotion in times of need and of peril, by affectionate attachment and kind-

ness, that none ever better deserved the rare privilege of remaining, at the end of fifty years, the greatest happiness of those it bound together. Under such favourable circumstances did the youthful prince enter upon the arduous duties of his office: but a more arduous task he imposed upon himself,—to strengthen and elevate his powers by liberal, all-sided culture, and to cause the prince to be forgotten in the man.

His heart, susceptible of friendship, had opened itself to a young man full of high aspirings and profound feeling, whom he had met with at Frankfurt on his way to Paris, before he assumed the reins of government, and whose writings had filled him with lively admiration. He gave him a cordial invitation, and soon won, for his whole life, the most faithful servant and intimate friend—nay, such a crown and ornament to his reign as no other land can boast.

Pursuing his remarkable career of mental development, it appeared to him—whose great object was future self-dependance—that a free, natural mode of life was the highest good, and that hardiness of body was a necessary condition of vigour and activity of mind.

At his court all cramping restraints were as much as possible removed; nothing was valued but what betokened freshness and vigour of mind; enquiry, experiment, investigation were set on foot in every direction; the physical sciences were zealously pursued; care was taken to open every possible path to industry and commerce; personal efforts were made to further every useful undertaking; facilities granted to every attempt at improvement, and a refined taste exercised and cultivated. And though many precipitate schemes failed, and even many well-grounded expectations were disappointed, yet the active spirit was

never discouraged, the clear glance was ever more strongly attracted by objects of real and universal utility.

Every fresh acquisition of knowledge or experience was therefore for the good of the whole: all were to participate in every advantage of their prince. He amended and simplified the administration of justice; took further precautions for the security of the poor and the unprotected; abolished fines to the church; opened the gloomy walls of the orphan-house, and gave its inmates fresh life and energy in the bosom of domestic comfort. Herder's aid was obtained for the church and public education, and he was, as soon as possible, placed at their head; public instruction was elevated and extended; normal schools for the formation of a regular supply of country schoolmasters were founded; a free-school of design instituted; art and industry on all sides encouraged.

Similarity of character and pursuits united him closely with the excellent Margrave Karl-Friedrich of Baden, with the noble prince of Dessau, with the frank and upright Duke George of Meiningen. His near connection with the Elector of Mainz had a considerable influence on the choice of Karl von Dalberg* as coadjutor, with whom he kept up a most confidential and mutually delightful correspondence.

His frequent travels brought him acquainted with the most remarkable statesmen and learned men of foreign countries; he was eager to drink from every source, to profit by every opportunity.

At the breaking out of the disastrous war with France, he joined the Prussian army. As if he were only about to make some new and interesting experiment, his Goethe

* See a short account of the extraordinary virtues, endowments, and acquirements of this venerable and enlightened man in the *Conversations-Lexicon.*—*Transl.*

must be his associate and share his danger and his glory. At the siege of Mainz, at the battle of Kaiserslautern, he gave proof of all the virtues of a soldier; every privation was borne with calmness, every opportunity of perilous distinction was eagerly seized.

In 1793 he had to endure the loss of his only and beloved brother, and the destruction of all his hopes of a favourable termination to the war. He returned to his country with dejected heart, but bore with him the unbroken, persevering activity which he now turned with double zeal to the service of his own subjects.

Nothing escaped his attention. He imported finer breeds of cattle, and improved implements of all kinds; examined into the state of medical schools and hospitals, of charitable institutions, of means of preservation from fire and other calamities;—wherever human succour could avail, there

was the duke to be found, by day or by night.

The meanest had access to him and a hearing at all times. Intimately acquainted with the necessities of all classes, he excited in all confidence and love, he attracted all irresistibly to him, without constraint or command. An approving look from him was the highest reward, a benevolent wish more than a law. Affection, and pleasure in serving him, often rose to passion, and they who had once attached themselves to him could never leave him; a word, a look from him, made them forget every toil. Thus did he reign securely and tranquilly by the simplest means. His power was doubled by the love his philanthropy inspired.

He continued his reforms of the administration of justice. His acute and vigilant eye detected in the circle of his faithful counsellors the modest, profound, and laborious man, fitted to be placed at the head

of affairs, and worthy of his entire confidence. In the person of Voïgt he found a compensation for the many aged excellent advisers of his earlier reign.

But the Beautiful went hand in hand with the Useful, and art and science flourished under the prince's liberal cares. Under Goethe's immediate direction the court-theatre became the model school of German dramatic art, and of easy, natural acting. Foreigners resorted to Weimar and to Jena, where youthful talents unfolded themselves in a secure and free asylum, and often attained to a maturity by which other countries were destined to benefit. This was the most flourishing period of the university of Jena. Its preeminence was not produced by wealth, nor by any artificial excitements; it was the observant, encouraging eye of the prince which animated and enhanced those glorious efforts; which stimulated those noble aspirations. It was the

mild and genial atmosphere of mental freedom and tolerance of opinion, which made every one feel so perfectly at ease in this narrow space; and as in the great garden of nature trees and flowers of the most differing kinds unfold in full luxuriance side by side, so did we here see the most various, nay repugnant, spirits distinguish themselves undisturbed, each in his own province, secure and free under the shield of their highminded Patron.

Under such auspices were fostered a Griesbach, Paulus, Reinhold, Fichte, Schelling*; a Loder, Feuerbach, Thibaut, Schutz, Tiek†;—the Humbolds, Hufeland, Schlegel, and so many other of the brightest stars of German literature. Here Schiller found a second home, and in Karl-August's favour and warm sympathy fresh stimulus and tranquil leisure for his immortal masterworks. The cosmopolitan Bode, the far-

* Philosophers and Philologists. † Jurists.

travelled Gore*, chose Weimar as their place of rest; here did the noble refugees, Montmorency, Mounier, Camille Jordan, and many others, find an asylum and respect amid the storms of the time; the most delightful and refined society surrounded the court, and Weimar, as well as the tranquil valley of Tiefurt (the summer residence of the Duchess-Mother), was the hallowed resort of the most distinguished pilgrims from all countries.

In the midst of these peaceful happy times the youthful hope of the country, the first-born son of the duke, had attained maturity, and had been united to a daughter of an imperial house. But this domestic felicity was soon interrupted by the most fearful calamity. Honour and duty summoned our prince to the unequal combat (1806) which Prussia waged against the overwhelming might of Napoleon; far from

* See vol. i. pp. 153 and 329.

the land of his ancestors, at the head of the only yet unconquered *corps d'armée*, the duke had to learn the invasion and pillage of his states,—the threatened annihilation of his existence as a sovereign*.

But even this tempest of calamity could not shake his heroic firmness. He insisted on remaining at the side of the King of Prussia, and only that monarch's express command—a proof of magnanimity worthy of a king—could induce him to lay down his field-marshal's staff, and to think of returning home and making terms with the conqueror.

On the fearful day after the battle of Jena, his high-hearted wife, by her intrepid firmness and dignified serenity, had impressed the conqueror with a respect and admiration, which was the immediate cause of the salvation of the country and of the ducal house. He received an envoy from Weimar

* See Memoir of the Grand-Duchess Luise.

in his head quarters, and before the end of the year peace was concluded at Posen. Soon after his return home the duke had to lament the death of his beloved mother; the most afflicting consequence of the war which had disturbed and broken all the springs of that invaluable life.

The investment of his country, the frightful contributions that were levied upon it, lay heavy on his heart; the great military road crossed his dominions; every day demanded new efforts; all the ties of social enjoyment, of the delightful cultivation of art, seemed broken, but the magnitude of the calamity did but redouble his vigour and energy. In the midst of his anxious endeavours to distribute the burthens of war with the greatest equity, and of the caution required by his still very critical political position, the most provident thought for the benefit and education of his people was never for a moment laid aside; mea-

sures for the simplification and improvement of the institutions of the country were never for a moment suspended. The hitherto divided states of Weimar and Eisenach were united under more similar constitutional forms; the *Landräthe* (councils of the country) were instituted with truly paternal views; new municipal systems, calculated to give energy and independence to the citizens, were introduced, and great ameliorations were made in the state of the law by the establishment of local criminal courts and of an improved penal system.

Amid the pressure of these lowering times the duke preserved his open clear glance and his tranquil temper, and constantly opposed a dignified demeanor to the often insolent demands of foreign domination. No feeling of personal alarm could restrain him from affording to his Prussian brothers-in-arms, a refuge and a home*, and the

* See Vol. i. p. 142.

expressed approbation and encouragement of a frank and noble heart. His situation with regard to Napoleon thus became more and more critical, especially when after his disastrous reverses in Russia, the emperor took the field for a fresh campaign (1813) in our valleys and on our frontiers, with mistrust and resentment against the most high-spirited of German princes in his heart, and with many a threat of violent measures on his tongue. But Providence preserved our sovereign to us. He escaped from the battle of Leipsig, as by a miracle. His heart beat high when he was greeted by the conquering monarchs on their visit to Weimar, as one of the saviours of Germany: he instantly joined the great confederation, and marched at the head of the third *corps d'armée*, to which his own brave subjects and all the Saxon troops were attached, into the Netherlands. Immediately after the conquest of Paris, he hastened thither, and while he

sedulously attended to the political interests of his country, devoted himself with his usual zeal to science and art. A visit to England afforded him the long desired opportunity of seeing industry and mechanical skill carried to their highest pitch. At his return (Sept. 1814) the triumph dearest to his heart awaited him,—the thousand-voiced joyous acclamations of his people.

Returning home with a considerable accession of territory, he immediately resolved to place the faithful servants and assistants of his government in situations of more extended activity, and higher dignity, and thus to render them sharers of his own prosperity. He made the wisest arrangements in his ministry; introduced various useful reforms, and on the birthday of his noble consort, his most valued servants of all classes and ranks received from his own hand the first honourable decorations, as proofs of his approbation.

Having thus satisfied the desires of his generous heart, he turned his whole mind to the construction of a fundamental law on the constitution and rights of the states (*Landstände*), and thus secured to his people the most solid guarantee for good government and civil freedom.

Taxation was rendered more uniform and equal; public credit raised and established; the peasant delivered from the oppressive remains of feudalism; burthens on landed property lightened, and trade freed from many vexatious restraints.

His perseverance conquered every obstacle that was opposed to the establishment of a supreme court of appeal (*Ober-Appellations-Gericht*) in Jena, common to the dominions of all the Saxon houses of the Ernestinian line*.

In a critical period of political excitement

* *i. e.* descended from Elector Ernst, son of Friedrich der Sanftmuthig, b. 1441.—*Transl.*

and exaggerated demands, among the youth of the German universities, his admirable good sense led him to combine firmness with indulgence*.

He did not desist till he had improved the condition of every sort of establishment for education, from the university to the meanest village school, both as to the funds and the course of instruction. He was also assiduous in completing lines of road, as means of promoting intercourse between all his subjects.

He was continually occupied with the consideration how the burthens caused by the war could be reduced to their *minimum*, and, after numerous experiments, he succeeded in leaving a most beneficent example how much may be accomplished with

* This refers to his conduct on occasion of the famous festival on the Wartburg, concerning which he and his ministers seem to have judged with an indulgent good sense, very favourably contrasted with the alarm and severity of the great powers.—*Transl.*

how little. By a judicious change of the portion of the population bearing arms, he made nine-tenths of the soldiery available for agriculture and mechanical employments.

His generous temper delighted in constant sympathy in the personal condition and fortunes of all who came in contact with him: after long years he retained a grateful recollection of every pleasant hour, of every little service; and testified this recollection to children and childrens' children.

Such a temper secured him respect and love wherever he went. Every foreign land was his home. His residence in Milan (1817) was commemorated by a medal. "*Il principe uomo*" was the simple and beautiful title which accompanied him in his travels.

The horizon of his life gradually became brighter and more cloudless; the tranquil

enjoyment of all the fruits of his progress in the arts and sciences, in all of which he took a lively interest, became more pure and deep-felt; gleams of the high intents and destinies of creation broke with increased brightness on his enquiring mind, from nature and from history; chemistry and botany peculiarly attracted him; his mild spirit felt itself at home amid the tranquil beauties and fresh bounties of the vegetable world. He collected around him the plants of every part of the world, watched the secrets of their growth with constant and tender care, and returned refreshed to the cares of government.

Thus was that free, natural life after which he had striven in his early years, at the expense of considerable sacrifices of ease and comfort, now granted to him in a fairer and more spiritual sense. He often stayed at Wilhelmsthal in the beauty and serenity of summer, assembling around him tried

friends and accomplished guests; but even from this retreat he conducted all the affairs of his government, and on hill and valley, in field and forest, there was not a spot to be found which did not share his affectionate cares.

Amidst this constant alternation of solicitude and of action, of exertion and of dignified enjoyment, the day of the celebration of the fiftieth year of his reign approached. Averse from all ostentation, he wished to withdraw from it, but he was obliged to yield to the loud wishes of his people. What a festival of joyous gratitude, of deep emotion, did he then witness,—heightened by the marked sympathy of other countries.

Inspired by his own spirit, towns, villages, and individuals rivalled each other in their efforts to hallow this day by institutions which might render it blessed to cotemporaries and to posterity. A well-designed

medal was presented to him by his most attached servants, and the establishment of the excellent burgher schools at Weimar and at Eisenach, as well as of many other new beneficent institutions, confirmed that consciousness of having laboured for the civilization of the remotest generations which was his ever-present reward. And thus may it be truly said of him, that even while he tarried among us, he enjoyed the fairest and noblest immortality.

The oldest and most confidential of his servants stood in unchanged freshness of spirit at his side. He entered with ardour into all arrangements for consecrating a second festival to this honoured friend, (7th November, 1825). Singular and rich as had been the blessedness of such a life-long union must be its reward. He caused a gold medal to be struck, on which his own likeness and that of his noble consort were united with that of Goethe; and as the

three had blended their light through life in one constellation, one common jubilee embraced their golden day of honour.

His second son returned from America in health and safety, and enriched with knowledge and experience*. A triple band of grand-children bloomed around the beloved ruler; his eldest grand-daughter was married to the son of the King of Prussia, and thus he saw the early ties of blood and of affection, which had bound him through life to the destinies of the noble house of Hohenzollern, secured to his heart's content.

He was spared to bless even a great-grand-son, whose birth he looked upon as an additional reason for visiting Berlin. Anxieties, but too well justified by the doubtful state of his health, gave rise to the most pressing entreaties that he would not attempt the journey, and many a

* Prince Bernhard, whose "Travels in America" are well known.—*Transl.*

gloomy presentiment oppressed his people; but, unused to spare his valuable life, and to repress that unwearied activity which was the element of his being, he disregarded all warnings. At first he appeared to overcome all the fatigues of the journey. Received most affectionately by the king and the royal family, greeted with reverence and honour by all, he enjoyed the purest and noblest pleasure of his heart;—when, on his return, while the memory and the relish of these delightful hours was yet on his mind, the angel of death overtook him, and gently and suddenly called him, without pain or struggle, to his better home. He died at Graditz, near Torgau.

Who was more worthy of such a death than he! Even in the deep unutterable grief which oppressed the noble partner of his life and reign, and all his family,—which oppressed us all, and made us deplore the loss of his presence as an irremediable ca-

lamity,—even at his hallowed tomb, we say, as Goethe said at the grave of his incomparable mother,—"This is the prerogative of the noblest natures,—that their departure to higher regions exercises a no less blessed influence than did their abode on earth; that they lighten us from above like stars by which to steer our course—often interrupted by storms; that those to whom we turned in life as the Beneficent, the Helpful, now attract our longing, aspiring glance as the Perfected, the Blessed."

Note.

[Extracted from M. Victor Cousin's *Rapport sur l'état de l'Instruction Publique dans quelques pays de l'Allemagne.* Paris. 1832.]

"En voyageant j'ai pu reconnaître à des signes non équivoques, à quel point l'instruction populaire est florissante dans tous ces pays. Par-tout, dans les moindres villages, j'ai rencontré des bandes d'enfans de l'âge le plus tendre, la plupart appartenant aux dernières classes du peuple, sans bas et sans souliers, avec la blouse bleue et le ceinturon de cuir, et sous le bras une ardoise et un livre de lecture (*Lesebuch*). Plus d'une fois je suis descendu de voiture, et j'ai examiné, entre les mains de ces enfans, ce livre de lecture qui m'a paru fort bien arrangé. Au lieu de ce *Lesebuch*, les enfans un peu plus âgés ont pour livres de lecture et d'étude la Bible, le catéchisme, et l'histoire biblique. La Bible n'est pas entière, comme vous le supposez bien, excepté le Nouveau Testament. Elle est de la traduction de Luther, qui, mâle et vive, a beaucoup fait pour le developpement de l'esprit moral et réligieux, et l'éducation du peuple."

* * * * * * * * * * * * * *

"L'instruction populaire est très florissante dans

le grand-duché de Saxe-Weimar. Les établissemens, étant fort nombreux, supposent necessairement une administration générale, qu'il importe de vous faire connaître. Je commencerai par vous parler de cette administration; je passerai à l'instruction primaire, puis au gymnase, puis à l'université; je terminerai par le budget des dépenses que coûte à ce petit état l'instruction publique, dans tous ses détails et dans sa totalité." * * *

" Dans le duché de Saxe-Weimar, l'instruction publique fait partie du ministère de l'intérieur. Elle est confiée à une commission dite *Consistoire*. En général, toute l'administration de l'instruction publique en Saxe-Weimar est ecclésiastique." * * "Le clergé s'est constamment montré zélé, passioné même, pour l'instruction publique. En revanche, les laïques ont une déférence naturelle pour l'autorité ecclésiastique. Une mutuelle confiance, enracinée dans les mœurs, met à-la-fois la réligion sous la protection des lumières, et les lumières sous celle de la religion." * * * * * * *

"Dans le duché de Saxe-Weimar, une loi de l'état ordonne à tous les pères de famille d'envoyer leurs enfans à l'école, ou de prouver qu'il leur font donner chez eux une instruction suffisante. Des peines sévères sont attachées à l'infraction de cette loi, qui remonte à l'origine même du protéstantisme. La

mission de l'état est de répandre la morale et les lumières ; de plus, il a le droit et le devoir de protéger l'ordre social au dedans, comme au dehors ; et l'on ne peut nier que de tous les moyens d'ordre intérieur, le plus puissant ne soit l'instruction générale.

" Dans tout village il y a un maitre d'école ; et par ce mot village (*Dorf*) on entend ici la plus petite réunion de familles. Une douzaine de maisons cachées dans le coin d'une vallée ont leur maitre d'école ; de sorte que nul ne peut alléguer qu'il n'a pas obéi à la loi, par impossibilité physique. Depuis l'âge de six ans, les enfans sont tenus d'aller à l'école, sauf la preuve à faire par les parens qu'ils reçoivent l'instruction suffisante à la maison paternelle."

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I cannot follow Monsieur Cousin through the interesting details of his report ;—though, without these details, it is impossible to conceive the paternal wisdom, combined with truly maternal solicitude and tenderness, of the provisions. After showing how admirably the sanctions and the ministers of religion are employed in furtherance of their appropriate work, the moral and intellectual improvement of the people, he gives a translation of a code of instructions to schoolmasters (*Allgemeine Dienst-instructionen für die Landschul-*

lehrer), which begins with these solemn and affecting words.

" *Préambule.*

" Les fonctions du maitre d'école doivent être rangées parmi les plus importantes de l'état, car elles ont pour but l'éducation morale et religieuse du peuple, à laquelle se rattache étroitement son éducation politique. Celui qui se charge de pareilles fonctions doit se vouer entièrement au service de Dieu, de la patrie, et de l'humanité. On doit supposer qu'il est lui-même un homme religieux et moral, et qui a la ferme volonté de travailler toute sa vie à son perfectionnement.

" Soyez les modèles du troupeau qui vous est confié, dit l'Ecriture sainte aux docteurs chrétiens. Aussi doivent ils s'appliquer, pendant tout le cours de leur vie, à régler leur conduite publique et privée de manière à édifier tous ceux qui les voient ou les entendent, et à leur offrir un modèle de piété, de probité, et de dignité morale. Le maitre d'école ne doit pas se contenter de remplir fidèlement ses devoirs ; il doit encore chercher à obtenir partout l'estime et la confiance."

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" Le pasteur et le maitre d'école n'ont qu'un seul et même but, dans la commune qui leur est confiée ; seulement chacun remplit ce but à sa manière."

M. Cousin next gives an ordonnance published by Karl August in 1821. "Cet ordonnance," says he, "entre dans une foule de détails qui témoignent de la haute sollicitude et de la paternelle sévérité du gouvernement grand-ducal relativement à l'instruction populaire."

The preamble begins thus:

"Nous CHARLES-AUGUSTE, par la grace de Dieu GRAND-DUC de SAXE-WEIMAR, Voulant donner plus d'unité aux réglemens existans pour ce qui concerne la tenue des écoles de campagne, et mettre les parens à même de connaître toutes leurs obligations et celles de leurs enfans;

"Considérant combien il est important que les enfans, dès leur plus tendre jeunesse, prennent l'habitude de la persévérance et de l'ordre; *&c.*

"ORDONNONS ce qui suit:"

Here follow twenty-six rules, embracing the minutest details as to hours of attendance, holidays, *&c.* in which every possible consideration of the need the parents may have of the assistance of the children at harvest, or other seasons, are taken into account, and reconciled with the least possible loss of instruction to the children. After making the most efficient regulations to enforce constant attendance on the part of the children, "De son côté," continues the benevolent ruler, "le maître

d'école devra s'attacher à rendre son école agréable aux enfans, et à faire qu'ils s'y trouvent bien." I lament that I cannot justify to myself the giving any further extracts from this curious document.

I find it also impossible to abridge into any reasonable compass Monsieur Cousin's account of the regular ascending scale of schools adapted to every class and every capacity. Every thing is cared for, every thing provided, with a forethought benevolence alone could inspire. The government, and the clergy working under its orders, are the efficient guardians, friends, and teachers of the people; and the cost at which all this is done is so small as to appear hardly credible in this wasteful country. A few sentences regarding the Normal School, and other institutions connected with public education, will give an idea of what is done.

" L'enseignement de l'école normale est profondement moral et religieux. Il est curieux de voir un cours d'anthropologie à côté d'un cours de religion. La géographie, l'histoire, la physique, et ce qu'on appelle en Allemagne les connoissances d'une utilité générale (*gemeinnützige Kentnisse*) sont cultivées avec soin.—J'approuve aussi le cours de Latin—" * * * * * * * * * *

" Mais il faut remarquer surtout l'enseignement

musical. C'est là que se révèle le génie musical et religieux de l'Allemagne.

" J'ai entendu plusieurs de ces jeunes gens toucher de l'orgue avec un vrai talent, et j'ai assisté à des chœurs parfaitement exécutés. Les maitres d'école ainsi formés deviennent les organistes du village, ce qui les lie plus étroitement avec le pasteur, et ajoute un peu à leur revenu."

Monsieur Cousin adds, that the primary normal school owes its organization to Herder, in 1784.

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" Deux fois par an, les instituteurs primaires de villages circonvoisins se rassemblent, et forment des conférences, où ils se rendent compte amicalement des méthodes qu'ils emploient et des résultats qu'ils obtiennent. Ces conférences contribuent au perfectionnement des methodes et à la propagation de celles qui, dans ces conférences, sont reconnues les meilleures.

" On a fondé un cercle de lecture, qui envoie à tous les maîtres d'école les meilleurs journaux et les meilleurs livres qui paraissent sur l'instruction primaire; ces journaux et ces livres passent de main en main à tous les maitres.———Il y a un semblable cercle de lecture pour les pasteurs. C'est ainsi qu'il n'est pas rare de rencontrer, dans les villages d'Allemagne, des pasteurs et des maîtres

d'école qui ont des connaissances à-la-fois solides, et étendues. Leur instruction relève leur position et en fait des hommes considérables dans leur localités."

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" La *Bürger-schule* de Weimar est ouverte a tous les enfans de la ville, filles et garçons. Elle est située dans un très-beau batiment; et les familles les plus aisées de la bourgeoisie y envoient leurs enfans, qui s'y trouvent avec ceux des classes les plus pauvres."

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" Le séminaire pour les maîtres d'école est annexé à la Bürgerschule, ce qui est une économie de bâtiment, de directeur, et même de plusieurs maîtres; on ne peut être admis dans cette école qu'après avoir subi des examens dont le consistoire se charge luimême, marquant par-là son haut intérêt pour l'instruction populaire. C'est de là que sortent tous les maîtres d'école de village. On ne peut être employé comme instituteur qu' à condition d'y être resté plus ou moins long-temps; et comme on n'y entre qu'après un examen, de même qu'on n'en sort, pour devenir maître d'école, qu'après avoir subi un autre examen plus sévère encore. On n'est pas reçu à cette école normale primaire avant seize ans. Chaque élève y paie une somme très-

petite, mais paie toujours quelque chose, ce qui est excellent; et comme il n'y a pas de pensionnat, cette école ne coute que très-peu de frais. Les élèves se logent dans la ville, sous la seule condition d'indiquer leur logement à l'inspecteur de l'école qui a les yeux sur leur conduite."

After mentioning the grand duke's admirable reform of the orphan asylum, and of his institution of the free school of design so often alluded to, he adds,

"On vient de fonder dans le local de l'institut de dessein, une école qui en est le dévéloppement et le couronnement; une école gratuite pour les ouvriers (*freye Gewerbschule*), dont je vous envoie les réglemens. Le but de cette école est le perfectionnement de la technologie (*Technik*). On y enseigne le dessin linéaire appliqué a la perspective, au dessin des machines, *&c.*, l'art de prendre des esquisses, d'ombrer, de modeller; les mathématiques, savoir, arithmétique, géometrie, statistique, et mecanique, et les élémens d'architecture. Les leçons se donnent les Dimanches et les jours de fête. On n'est admis à cet école qu'apres un examen; c'est à-la-fois un honneur et un avantage."

The following are the concluding words of M. Cousin's report:

" L'éducation publique semble l'objet principal de ce gouvernement vraiment paternel; et je n'oublierai jamais les deux jours que j'ai passés à Weimar dans le spectacle de la puissance uniquement occupée à rendre les hommes meilleurs et plus heureux."

It is a noble thing to see mighty France thus, in the person of one of her most eminent men, put herself to school to small and powerless Weimar;—honourable to both, as a fit homage to the eternal supremacy of enlightened benevolence*.

* Just as I have been occupied upon this note, I see, as an accidental commentary upon it, that, while the government of France has thus virtually recognized this its most sacred duty towards its subjects, the government of England has, through the mouth of one of its most distinguished organs, formally disclaimed and abjured any such obligation. With all the talk we have heard on the subject for years; with the command of resources which, as compared with those of any other country, may fairly be called boundless, it seems strange that no less impotent a conclusion can be arrived at than this;—that it is expedient the people be left to shift for themselves, or to depend on "charity" for instruction; as if the claim of a people on its rulers, for the application of a part of its resources to the object most indispensable to its well-being, had any thing to do with "charity!" The "despotic" government of Prussia would be careful not to insult its subjects with such a

suggestion. We are accustomed to hear a great deal of the immense advantages of liberty of the press, and doubtless with reason. But it is worth while to ask whether so much good is done by permitting an inundation of undigested trash over an ignorant community, as by beginning with the cultivation of the national capacity for judging of what it reads. The universal demand thus created for mental food of a high quality will be sure in time to secure an appropriate supply.

We are very fond of laughing at "beggarly German states;" but it might be as well if we asked ourselves why these people, whose poverty is so despicable, can afford themselves an excellent education, while we can afford ourselves none.—*Transl.*

MEMOIR

OF

THE GRAND DUCHESS LUISE

OF SACHSEN-WEIMAR EISENACH.

FROM THE GERMAN OF

CHANCELLOR VON MÜLLER.

I hope the insertion of this little memoir will not be thought impertinent. It exhibits another of the felicitous influences under which it was Goethe's lot to live. Many people will doubtless regard it as a piece of court flattery, for the temper of the times is not favourable to any very nice discrimination or impartial judgment of the characters of rulers. But even were it an exaggeration, I should still think so noble a picture of womanly virtue and courage a useful object of contemplation, and one which a woman might hope to be excused for not liking to omit. The notes which follow, communicated by a friend to whose kindness I am already deeply indebted, will be found to support the testimony of the author of the memoir.

S. A.

MEMOIR

OF

THE GRAND DUCHESS LUISE.

To the Memory of the Grand Duchess Luise, of Sachsen-Weimar Eisenach. April, 1830.

To the noblest natures alone is it granted, by the peculiarity of their lives and actions, by their constant and undeviating tendency towards what seems to them right and dignified, to leave so indelible an impress of their own image, that even when called away to their higher destination, that image remains with us in all the freshness of life; giving comfort and blessing to all who turn to it in affectionate reverence, and descending to late generations as an abiding and

glorious proof of the moral grandeur which a firm, pure will may achieve for itself.

Thus do we find comfort and peace, under the loss of a princess so loved and honoured, in that picture of her rare virtues, which is stamped on so many hearts. Let us strive, by the affectionate contemplation of its separate features, to make the precious possession our own for ever.

The Grand Duchess Luise was born at Berlin in 1757, at the time that her father, the then reigning Landgraf Ludwig IX. of Hessen-Darmstadt, was a general in the Prussian service, valued and distinguished by Frederick II. The youngest of five sisters, she shared with them the inestimable happiness of living under the watchful eye of a mother of large and cultivated intellect, who had the art of implanting and fostering the seeds of the noblest sentiments and principles in their minds. She early learned to regard the privileges of her birth as so

many high and imperative duties, to the conscientious performance of which the whole dignity of her station was unconditionally attached. Gifted with a very lively apprehension, and a singularly earnest desire for all valuable knowledge, she soon attained to a firmness of principle, a security of judgment and of taste, far beyond her years; to which the mildness and gentleness of her whole demeanor formed the most delightful apparent contrast. After the marriage of her elder sister Wilhelmine (whom she accompanied into Russia) to the grand prince Paul, and the death of her lamented mother, she remained for some time with her sister Amalie, who was just married to the hereditary prince of Baden. Here the young duke Karl-August of Sachsen-Weimar saw her on his way to Paris, and a mutual attachment arose, which was crowned by marriage in October, 1775.

The young princess entered on her new

station with a calm dignity and independence rare in a person of her age. There was much which must have appeared to her not only unaccustomed but extraordinary. The palace had shortly before been a prey to the flames. The means for rebuilding it were to be got together only by rigid economy, and the ducal family meanwhile inhabited the unadorned apartments of the country house. The court theatre as yet did not exist; the small gardens belonging to the palace had not attained that extent and beauty which, at a later period, gave them such attractions for her. On almost every side new circumstances were to create or to unfold;—the free love of nature, which characterized the young and lively prince, strove to make itself a way in every direction, and, with the joyous spirit of youth, to throw off the fetters of antiquated forms.

The unconstrained, cheerful, social tone

which reigned at the court of the Duchess-Mother, Amalie, which was governed less by any fixed rules than by the exquisite tact of her who presided over it;—the gay, easy interweaving of the Real and the Poetical, which had so peculiar a charm for the initiated of this circle, and created an almost idyllic world around them,—what a contrast must this form to the ordinary state and pomp of a princely court retaining all its antiquated usages; to the rigorous rules of outward deportment which the young princess had been taught to regard as the necessary conditions of a dignified existence.

But this very circumstance afforded her an opportunity for displaying the fairest proofs of the freedom of her own spirit. Carefully avoiding all attempts at opposition, her delicate tact enabled her to find that middle point at which, without any renunciation of her own distinctive qualities,

she could appropriate to herself all that was truly natural or instructive in the modes of thought and of action around her, and tranquilly suffer all that was not in harmony with her character to pass by her unnoticed. At merry country fêtes and sports, in the sledge party or the masquerade, in the simplest intercourses of life, and in the audience chamber, she had the art of retaining the same quiet dignity of demeanour,—kind without familiarity,—rigid to herself, indulgent to others. Wherever she appeared she commanded equal respect, and awakened the instantaneous feeling of the presence of a being whom nothing mean or unworthy could ever approach.

Her clear intellect found an ever-encreasing charm in the conversation of those men of genius and learning whom her husband gathered about him. She took the liveliest interest in their literary productions, and so great was the respect which her correct

taste and sound understanding commanded from these men, that they regarded her judgment as the most secure test, her approbation as at once an incentive and a reward of their exertions.

Herder's views of religion, and of the history and destiny of man, had an uncommon attraction for her; she invited him frequently to converse with her, and though she carefully avoided all ostentation of science or learning, she pursued her studies in the English and Latin languages (with the best authors in which she was already acquainted) secretly under his direction. When, at a later period, he refused an extremely advantageous invitation to Göttingen, his faithful and devoted attachment to her was one of the main grounds of his decision. How beautiful an influence her unvarying regard for Goethe already produced on him; how delicately his deep veneration for the princess was breathed forth

on every fit occasion, in poems which rendered the transient occurrence of the moment an event of importance, is sufficiently known. She felt indeed all the value of such refined homage, but her genuine modesty always seemed to suffer when it was publicly offered her. Every thing, on the contrary, that tended to the praise and honour of her husband, every thing that indicated a true recognition of his manysided efforts and his noble desires for the public good, and a faithful cooperation in them, was received by her with unconcealed joy and satisfaction.

As it was an inviolable law with her to shun the slightest appearance of interference in the affairs of government, so, on the other hand, she held it to be her duty, in all that concerned the order and regularity of the court, to enforce her own conviction that nothing but a consistent adherence to rules, once acknowledged to be useful, could maintain the dignity of the

sovereign, and avert the painful impression of arbitrary caprice.

Beneficence was a necessity of her nature, but in the utmost silence and secrecy; indeed, every virtue seemed to her to deteriorate the moment it sought notoriety. It were not easy to describe this delicate quality of her mind more strikingly than in Goethe's lines, written for a masque in 1782. The feminine virtues accost her thus—

"Wir umgeben	Dieser Feyer
Stets Dein Leben,	Wir uns freyer
Doch Dein Wille	Heute zeigen,
Heisst uns stille	Im Gedränge
Wirkend schweigen.	Vor der Menge
Ach, verzeihe,	Dir begegnen
Dass zur Weihe	Und Dich segnen*!'

a blessing that was truly and richly fulfilled!

* "We constantly	Of this festival
Surround thy life;	We this day
Yet thy will	Show ourselves more boldly!
Bids us quietly	In the press,
Work in silence.	Before the multitude,
Ah, forgive	Meet thee,
That in celebration	And bless thee!"

The birth of an hereditary prince (1783), long and universally desired, filled the country with joy. Three years later the Princess Caroline was born, and in 1792 Prince Bernhard.

Our princess thus saw the sphere of her modest activity enlarged in the manner most consonant to her wishes, and devoted herself with zeal to the education of her children.

Years passed—but in their course common experience, common joys and cares, an ever-clearer and purer perception of mutual worth, and an uninterrupted sincere interchange of ideas and views, raised the union between the noble couple to that rare intimacy and perfection which, exhaustless in sympathy and confidence, gave encouragement to one character, salutary restraint to another, elevation to all.

Peaceful times had raised the prosperity of the land, favoured the progress of use-

ful institutions, and afforded a clear field for the exercise of the prolific energy of our prince. The refined hospitality of the court, the ever-rising fame of our first poets and authors, the establishment of a theatre which was a perfect school of dramatic art, attracted distinguished and enlightened foreigners, some of whom fixed themselves in our circle. Among these the family of the far-travelled Englishman, Gore, was especially esteemed and beloved by our princess. With Miss Emily Gore, whose character was so akin to her own in noble delicacy and tranquil firmness, she formed a friendship which, present or absent, continued with undiminished warmth till death.

With the breaking out of the French revolution began a new and eventful period. A heavy lowering atmosphere was soon felt hanging over Germany; a suddenly heightened interest in politics, and in the solution of questions the most important to the

peace and welfare of nations, soon displayed itself with passionate vehemence, even in the higher circles of society, and perplexed and divided the most generous minds. What some regarded as the dawn of civil freedom and of a blessed conquest over prejudice and darkness, appeared to others a fearful mark of moral and intellectual perversion, and a wanton overthrow of the most sacred and necessary order.

In such a period of party excitement, it was no small merit of the duchess that though she steadily adhered to her own principles, and though she was deeply wounded through her nearest and dearest connections, yet, in all her judgments, thoughts, and actions towards those who thought differently, she observed a moderation and indulgence the most difficult to strong characters—but which, for that very reason, she regarded as an imperative duty.

On her husband's return from the disas-

trous expedition to Champagne, she went to him in his winter quarters at Frankfurt, and staid several months. In December, 1793, her most ardent desire was fulfilled, and he returned to his own people. It was now her greatest pride to see him turn the whole of his vast activity to the increase of his people's welfare and the establishment of useful institutions.

She took the liveliest interest in every undertaking, and in all cases of personal or external difficulty he received the best counsel from her sound and circumspect judgment. Whatever related to art or science, especially in all that regarded the university of Jena, then in its highest bloom, excited her warmest interest. Many of the most distinguished men of Jena, — Griesbach, Humbold, Hufeland, Loder, Reinhold, — rejoiced in her animating sympathy and intelligent conversation. At a later period, when Schiller was drawn to Jena, and after-

wards resident at Weimar, his lofty spirit found full appretiation, his large and lofty efforts constant encouragement and support from her.

At this time Madame de Staël passed a winter in Weimar, and was received with the greatest distinction at court. Here she came into frequent collision with Schiller, and drew forth all the weapons of her dazzling wit and eloquence to influence his judgment and win his approbation, or at least to engage him in controversy.

On these occasions the ever-heightening animation, the copiousness of thought with which, even in a foreign tongue, the earnest and profound poet strenuously defended his own opinions and the peculiar characteristics of German poetry, afforded the duchess the richest enjoyment.

In 1804 she had the happiness of seeing her eldest son married to the grand princess of Prussia, Maria Paulowna,

But the fiery ordeal in which her virtues were to be tried was now at hand. Scarcely had war broken out between France and Prussia, in October, 1806, when our peaceful vallies reechoed with the roar of artillery. The duke, at the head of his troops, was at a distance, on the other slope of the Thuringian chain. Before his departure he had sent the hereditary prince and princess to Schleswig; but so overwhelming a calamity as the loss of a decisive battle in a few days, so near to Weimar, was beyond the reach of any foresight. On the 14th of October, about mid-day, when the defeat of the Prussian army was no longer doubtful, the duchess made instant arrangements for removing her daughter and the duchess-mother out of the wild tumult of war. To escape from it herself did not for a moment enter her thoughts.

Nearer rolled the wave of destruction—nearer the thunder of the fight;—cannon

balls fell in the city—wounded and dead filled the streets. A part of the hostile army had hardly entered Weimar in the evening, when the most rapacious pillage began. The fall of night encreased the terror. Fire broke out a short distance from the castle, the flames cast their red glare into the duchess's apartments, and the cries of distress mingled with the wild riot of the drunken soldiery. French officers and their suites had taken possession of the greater part of the palace. The duchess had afforded to many persons of the town, nay whole families, with their valuables, an asylum and protection in her own part of the building. The most considerable lay about her antichamber in confused and motley groups.

All the provisions in the palace were soon seized by the French, and the duchess herself left in absolute want. But though all outward supports and appearances of her princely dignity were wrenched from her—

her courage, *her* firm enduring constancy, remained erect. After twenty-four hours of fearful expectation, Napoleon entered Weimar in person.

With the same simple dignified serenity of manner which she wore in the days of prosperity did she, surrounded by her court-servants, receive the haughty conqueror. He addressed to her, it is true, but a few hasty salutations; but his surprise at her reception of him, and at her calmness in so fearful a scene, was sufficiently expressed in the words he addressed to General Rapp, "Voilà une femme qu'avec nos deux cent canons nous n'avons pas pu faire trembler!"

In this most momentous conversation* of her life, with what serene dignity she met the violence with which the emperor denounced her husband for his participation in the war, and declared his intention of

* See an account of this conversation, confirmed by the duchess herself, at the end of this article.

driving him from his throne and states; with what high-minded freedom she urged the ties of honour and of fidelity which bound him to Prussia; with what noble ardour she defended his cause, and that of her country, and to what a degree she thus extorted from the emperor respect and admiration, and led him to milder measures;—all this he attested so fully, by word and deed, that it remains a portion of history. "You possess the ornament of German princesses," said he, a few weeks afterwards in Berlin, to the Weimar deputies; "whatever I may do for the country or for the duke is done purely for her sake; her conduct ought to serve as a model to every throne in Europe; never did I see women of truer moral dignity than she and her sister, the Markgräfin of Baden!"

In the year 1813, a few days before the battle of Lutzen, Napoleon visited her and instantly granted to her intercession the

liberation of two persons in the service of Weimar who had been imprisoned.

Thus then to *her*, who, during her whole life, had kept far aloof from all political interference, was it granted to save her husband and her country at their utmost need, solely by the calm force of her stedfast, consistent character.

But however loud the applauses of the world, however intense the gratitude of her people, to her alone all that she had done appeared perfectly simple, and, as it were, of course; indeed scarcely worthy of notice. Many years afterwards, shortly after the jubilee-day of her husband, affectionate respect marked the return of the fourteenth of October by a tasteful medal, with the head of her, and the inscription,

"Das gerettete Weimar*,"

surrounded by a wreath of oak leaves; in the letter of thanks she addressed to Goethe

* Weimar saved.

she once more expressed her conviction, "that a very simple incident had been made of much too great importance, for that it had arisen quite naturally out of the events of the time."

To the deep wounds which war had inflicted were added the loss of one never to be forgotten in Weimar—the Duchess-Mother Amalie. The Duchess Luise instantly took upon herself the duty of providing for all who were immediately dependent upon the deceased. Einsiedel, who had been chamberlain, was transferred to the same post about her own person, and Wieland, to his latest breath, received from her the most delicate attention and the kindest sympathy.

The birth of two grandchildren, and the marriage of her only daughter to the hereditary prince of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, contributed to diffuse sunshine over her life; but dark clouds were now again gathering over the political horizon.

War at length broke out in 1812 between France and Russia, and Weimar had to suffer the dreadful pressure of countless armies marching through her territory, and monstrous contributions and exactions of every kind, almost to exhaustion. The duchess, from the great mistrust of the Emperor Napoleon in her husband's dispositions (which indeed the duke did not always try to conceal), had cause to fear for his personal safety. The danger would have been more imminent, had not a noble-minded man, Baron de Saint-Aignan, then French ambassador in Weimar, out of pure cordial respect for the grand-ducal family, endeavoured most disinterestedly to remove all causes of misunderstanding and suspicion, to place equivocal things in the fairest light, and, as far as his most difficult position would permit, to act as a defender and protector of Weimar.

Shortly after the battle of Leipsig the

duke again took the command of the third *corps d'armée*, and marched into the Netherlands. The military preparations of various kinds exhausted the already drained treasury, and when Napoleon's return from Elba renewed these expenses, the embarrassment was extreme. The duchess now voluntarily placed her own private jewels at the unlimited disposal of the States—to turn into money in any way they could. When they were afterwards redeemed, she was with difficulty prevailed upon to take them again.

After these oft-renewed storms and horrors of war, peace, so long desired, at length arrived; the duchess saw her husband's territory and dignity encreased, and the old contract of love and faith between prince and people most worthily ratified by a constitution adapted to the times.

Amid such vicissitudes of outward things —amid such experience of all that can ren-

der the life of a prince enviable or pitiable—the grand duchess had passed the middle of life. The evening found her what she had been in the morning; only more mature, more tried, more enlightened in the exercise of every virtue after which she had striven; only with heightened susceptibility to every thing great and honourable that presented itself, at home or abroad, in so busy an age; with ever warmer attachment to the friends of her heart and mind; and especially—like her noble consort—with ever purer joy in the beauty of nature and in the contemplation of the peaceful circle of her exhaustless productions.

Her happiest days were spent in the beautiful romantic Wilhelmsthal, though it was often necessary to use great persuasion to induce her to go there, so great was her aversion to any additional expense being incurred on her account.

Whoever has seen her there, wandering

in her simple morning dress in the shady gardens that surrounded her modest dwelling, or reposing in confidential conversation on her favourite seats by the lake, or, in her evening circle, pointing out the choicest views to one and to another, awakening and sharing delight and enjoyment, and not seldom prompting the gayest jokes, — must retain the most beautiful image of elevated peace of soul, and calm, noble, self-sufficing existence. She delighted in being visited there by the persons she liked best, and took the kindest precautions that every one of her guests should feel at home, and that without the least interference with their freedom. Indeed a delightful faculty of entering into the circumstances of all with whom she was connected, and unconquerable fidelity in friendship, were main features of her character.

Whoever had once gained her respect

and affection—(and never did she bestow the one till she knew the other to be well-founded)—might reckon upon it securely for life.

Truth and fidelity were the elements of her being; and, with all her extreme patience and indulgence for human frailty and error, she never could restrain the most decided expression of contempt when any example of betrayal of confidence, or of falling off in friendship in consequence of altered outward circumstances, was mentioned in her presence. And not less hateful to her inmost soul was flattery and cajolery of princes; nor could she any more comprehend how the one party could accept it without self-degradation, than the other offer it without moral baseness. For acknowledgement of the Right and the Praiseworthy, encouragement of merit, and rigorous justice in the consideration of every incident, seemed to her so completely the natural

duties of a prince, that she felt it an insult if people thought they must decoy her into the exercise of them by petty artifices. The freest opinions might be uttered without reserve in her presence, if they proceeded from sincere conviction; and she willingly undertook the defence of a line of conduct unpleasing to herself, and at variance with her own opinions, if it was founded on a true, genuine, manly character, or excused by some injustice suffered. She never judged political events by their results, but solely according to that idea of right and justice to which she adhered in the greatest things as in the smallest; nor could she ever bring herself to sacrifice them to present advantage or expediency. Sparing in outward demonstrations of favour, the smallest word of approbation from her had the highest value; her disapprobation was generally expressed by silence; though this was from no want of sensibility.

That expression of a witty monarch, "Punctuality is the true politeness of the great," applied to her in the highest degree. Extremely regular in the distribution of her own time, it was painful to her to know that of others in any degree invaded; and in the smallest incidents of daily life she never permitted her own caprice or convenience to be put in the place of settled arrangements.

How often, even after her health had begun to decline, did she make the greatest efforts to overcome her bodily sufferings, in order that the customary days of reception, or anything she thought a duty to others, might not be neglected!

The thought of increasing the demands on the treasury, by any wants of hers, was intolerable to her. Only twice during her long life could she be prevailed on to take that sum which, according to her marriage settlement, she had an absolute claim to

every year;—and then only for journeys absolutely necessary to her health.

When the duke's domain and revenue were considerably augmented, she disdained to receive the least addition to her income, the greater part of which, too, she constantly expended for the most beneficent ends. And it is incredible how much, by means of strict order, and self-denial in all matters of personal expense, she found means to give to indigent and necessitous persons of every rank; to poor students, to schools, and to establishments of public utility.

But even her beneficence bore a peculiar stamp. She did not give merely to appease a momentary feeling of pity, but always with careful deliberation, and, in preference, where it was not known, and she could escape all thanks;—nay often, in order to spare the feelings of the receiver, in so concealed a manner, that the persons most immediately about her knew nothing of it.

In her breast every secret confided to her lay close locked; even what was casually told her of private misunderstandings and offences never passed her lips where it could injure or give pain. Hence her presence inspired involuntary confidence and frankness, and every one felt, as in the presence of a superior being, his heart lightened as soon as he had disclosed his circumstances to her.

To many noble-minded women she served as a pattern and a standard through life. In the journal of one long dead were found these striking words, "Were she but my equal, this noble princess, whom, among the many I know, I prefer to all, that I might freely express my love and admiration for her! She loves goodness for goodness' sake; she is patient, for so it becomes us to be, because wheat and tares must stand together for a time; but she knows each plant exactly according to its worth. By

her side every one moves in safety, for in all she respects the human being."

So pure and genuine a character found universal respect and admiration; and it is remarkable that envy and calumny, "*die so gern das Strahlende zu schwarzen lieben**," never ventured to attack her. Never could a low or unworthy motive be ascribed to a single act of hers with the remotest appearance of probability. Pure and spotless as she passed through life, did she stand in the opinions of all her cotemporaries; and though many a wish was checked by her strict and punctual maintenance of prescribed forms, it never occurred to any one to attribute this to pride, nor to contempt for others.

In the spring of 1823 she was attacked by a dangerous illness; her life was despaired of, but she recovered in a wonderful manner.

* Which love so dearly to blacken the Brilliant.

Her recovery was hailed by the whole country as a precious boon of Heaven; and especially by the grand duke, who, when all hope seemed at an end, secretly determined to quit Weimar for ever.

Seven beneficent years of her protecting existence and influence were granted to us. Who can count the hours of confidential intercourse, sympathy, and encouragement which in these years she bestowed on those around her? who estimate the blessing of noble impressions and humane feelings, combined with the fullness of youthful pleasure, which the blooming circle of her grandchildren received from her? who calculate the sum of the tears she dried, or the riches of intellectual life and refreshing benevolence which, by word and deed, by precept and example, she diffused abroad?

Her firm soul was destined, even at an advanced age, to experience all of sorrow or of joy that can most deeply affect a no-

ble heart. She saw the golden jubilee-day of her husband,—for her, whose highest pride had ever been his glory,—the sweetest and most triumphant day of her life, from the grateful homage of an attached people, the marked sympathy of all Germany. She witnessed the return of a manly, energetic son from another hemisphere, and the union of two dearly-loved granddaughters with two princes of Prussia, and lived to bless the birth of children of the third generation.

But she had also to bear the bitterest that could befal her on earth;—the loss of her husband,—with whom her whole existence seemed so interwoven, that, as long as she breathed herself, she seemed as if she could not doubt of the security of his life.

But even here she fulfilled with perfect self-command the duty of dignified fortitude, and entire resignation to the will of

Providence. In the ever-encreasing feeling of her irreparable loss she found the only consolation adapted to her character; the certainty that the actively beneficent life, and liberal, expansive principles of her husband would remain an eternal blessing to this age and to posterity.

"My existence is closed," repeated she frequently; "the few days I have to live are consecrated to the contemplation of his exalted virtues, and to the elevating feeling of his glory."

It was the anxious desire of those bound to her by the tenderest filial love that she should not feel the slightest change in the position she had held as reigning princess: but, gratefully as she acknowledged these affectionate cares, no representations or entreaties could induce her to retain her apartments in the palace, or any of her other privileges. For even the power of habit and old attachment yielded, in her, to the

conviction that every situation has its appropriate and consistent concomitants, which are not to be departed from.

In April, 1829, therefore, she returned to the same apartments in the country house, which, fifty-four years before, she had entered as a bride. Every thing had been done to adorn them in the most agreeable manner, and to secure to her every convenience; far more open and cheerful than formerly was her view into the adjoining park; but a few steps, and she was in the midst of the plants and flowers she loved so to watch and tend, and every where calm enjoyment seemed prepared for her.

But what recollections must have peopled the long untenanted rooms! what nameless feelings must have filled her breast! Yet her outward demeanour was not altered; only those most in her confidence saw the traces of the inward conflict. Always the same in benignity and gentleness,

in lively interest in the events of the time and in every intellectual advance; accessible to natives and to foreigners; nobody quitted her presence without feeling raised and edified.

As it was her strongest desire to show unremitting attention and respect to all who had been valued and loved by her husband, and often to talk from her full heart of his life and actions, she kept punctually to her weekly morning visit to Goethe, a kind custom of many years standing; and in intelligent participation in all the new discoveries of nature and art which were communicated to him, she found the most soothing enjoyment.

A residence at Dornburg, and the visit of her beloved granddaughters from Berlin, had cheered her summer; when, in December, 1829, an unfortunate fall, and the fracture of the collar-bone, excited great solicitude for her. The firmness with which

she had borne all accidents did not forsake her. She had overcome the severest pain—her recovery seemed at hand, when suddenly her strength failed.

The tenderest filial love and care surrounded her, and sought consolation in every encouraging word that escaped her lips. No shadow of fear passed over her soul;—no complaint, no painful emotion, troubled the serenity of her last moments; gentle and imperceptible was her departure, like the setting of the sun whose rays continue to lighten upon us even after it has sunk.

NOTE.

[Communicated by a Friend

You are aware that the most memorable incident in the life of the late Grand Duchess of Weimar was the short residence of Buonaparte in the chateau at Weimar, after the battle of Jena in 1806, and her successful interposition with him at the moment of that great catastrophe. I know not in what way the Chancellor von Müller has adverted to this occurrence, but if he has not gone into the detail, the accompanying account may be worth your adoption. It has, as you will find, acquired an authenticity which newspaper articles seldom receive. I published it in December, 1807, from information derived from my friends at Jena.

" Among the few who retained the elevation of the ancient German character, even at the momen of its lowest degradation, was the reigning Duchess of Saxe-Weimar, Louisa, daughter of the Landgrave of Hesse-Darmstadt. Her consort, as is well known, was one of the generals of the King of Prussia in the ever memorable campaign of 1806. When the allied armies collected themselves in the little territory of the duke, where it was

resolved to wait the arrival of the French; when it was determined to hazard the battle which was to decide the fate of all Germany in the vicinity of Weimar, the duchess resolved to abide in her residence. The aged and venerable duchess dowager, the mother of the duke and sister of the commander-in-chief, the Duke of Brunswick, and the hereditary Prince of Weimar, with his imperial consort, the sister of the Emperor Alexander, retreated precipitately to Brunswick; but the duchess, even after the fatal issue of the battle of Jena was foreseen, retired within the walls of her palace, and waited the event with calmness and resignation. She had assembled round her the ladies of her court, and generously offered an asylum to the English, whose situation was then so perilous. Her amiable friend Miss Gore, with her aged parent, since deceased, and Mr. Osborne, a gentleman who formerly filled a diplomatic character in several of the continental courts, were among the select party whom the duchess collected together in a wing of the castle, while the state apartments were opened for the reception of the unwelcome and terrific guest. During the awful 14th of October, the duchess and her friends were immured in their recess, and had no nourishment but a few cakes of chocolate found by acci-

dent. When the fortunes of the day began to be decided (and that took place early in the morning), the Prussians retreating through the town, were pursued by the French, and slaughtered in the streets. Some of the inhabitants were murdered, and a general plunder began. In the evening the conqueror approached and entered the palace of the duke, now become his own by the *right* of conquest. It was then that the duchess left her apartment, and seizing the moment of his entering the hall, placed herself on the top of the staircase to greet him with the formality of a courtly reception. Napoleon started when he beheld her. '*Qui êtes vous?*' he exclaimed with his characteristic abruptness. '*Je suis la Duchesse de Weimar.*' '*Je vous plains,*' he retorted fiercely, '*j'ecraserai votre mari.*' He then added, 'I shall dine in my apartment,' and rushed by her.

"The night was spent, on the part of the soldiery, in all the horrid excesses of rapine. The inhabitants were exposed, without defence, to all the licentious excesses of a military*, intoxicated

* One instance only the writer of this article is induced to single out, from the accident of his being personally acquainted with the unhappy subject of it. The apartments of an old gentleman (he was upwards of seventy) were broken into, and every thing in them

with victory. The duchess and her friends remained in a state hardly less deplorable; for though not exposed to personal danger, their feelings were sharpened by a finer sensibility. Though exhausted by suffering, the duchess had resolved not to abandon the unhappy inhabitants without an effort in their favour. Accordingly, she sent her chamberlain early in the morning to enquire concerning the health of his majesty the emperor, and to solicit an audience. The morning dreams of Napoleon had possibly soothed his mind to gentleness, or he recollected that he was monarch as well as general, and could not refuse what the Emperor owed to the Duchess: he accordingly returned a gracious answer, and invited himself to breakfast with her in her apartment.

" On his entrance, he began instantly with an interrogative (his favourite figure). 'How could your husband, Madam, be so mad as to make war against me?' 'Your majesty would have despised him if he had not,' was the dignified answer he

rifled and destroyed. The soldiers had found below some fowls, and insisted that he should instantly pluck them. He very placidly complied, and began his task, they deriding him in the performance of it. Upon his rising, however, to fetch his spectacles, he was knocked down, and beaten so cruelly that he died. This was Krause, the painter.—See Vol. I. p. 153.

received. 'How so?' he hastily replied. The duchess slowly and deliberately rejoined, 'My husband has been in the service of the King of Prussia upwards of thirty years, and surely it was not at the moment that the king had so mighty an enemy as your majesty to contend against, that the duke could abandon him.' A reply so admirable, which asserted so powerfully the honour of the speaker, and yet conciliated the vanity of the adversary, was irresistible. Buonaparte became at once more mild, and, without noticing the answer already received, continued his interrogatories. 'But how came the duke to attach himself to the King of Prussia?' 'Your majesty will on enquiry find, that the Dukes of Saxony, the younger branches of the family, have always followed the example of the Electoral House; and your majesty knows what motives of prudence and policy have led the Court of Dresden to attach itself to Prussia rather than Austria.

"This was followed by further enquiries and further answers, so impressive, that in a few minutes Napoleon exclaimed with warmth, '*Madame, vous êtes la femme la plus respectable que j'ai jamais connue: vous avez sauvé votre mari.*' Yet he could not confer favour unaccompanied with insult; for reiterating his assurances of esteem, he

added, '*Je le pardonne, mais c'est à cause de vous seulement; car, pour lui, c'est un mauvais sujet.*' The duchess to this made no reply; but seizing the happy moment, interceded successfully for her suffering people. Napoleon gave orders that the plundering should cease: and afterwards ordered that Mr. Osborne should be released, who had in the mean while been arrested.

"There are not wanting those who have affected to consider this incident as honourable to the conqueror. But the praise of generosity cannot well be given where the motives of policy are apparent. The court of Weimar is connected more closely than any other with Russia, by the marriage of the Emperor Alexander's sister with the hereditary prince. Buonaparte has never overlooked the necessity of ultimately conciliating the favour of Russia. It is the only power on the continent of Europe which he had a motive to conciliate. Subsequent events have shown that his efforts have not been ineffectual; and it is not the least of his victories, that we see the Emperor of the North in the train of his instruments and accessories.

"After the departure of Buonaparte from Weimar to Berlin and Poland, he continued to express the same opinion of the duchess he first uttered. When the duke waited upon him at Dresden, he

was warm in her praises; he added, however, 'But your soldiers are the worst I ever saw: two-thirds of them deserted before the contingent joined my army.' The duke might have replied, 'Sire, when my soldiers were fighting against you, not one of them deserted.'

"When the treaty which secured the nominal independence of Weimar, and declared its territory to be a part of the Rhenish League, was brought from Buonaparte to the duke by a French general, and presented to him, he refused to take it into his own hands, saying, with more than gallantry, 'Give it to my wife: the Emperor intended it for her.'"—*Times*, December 26, 1807.

I visited Weimar in 1818, and had reason to believe from the conversation I had with several friends that this narrative is substantially correct; but though I repeatedly dined with the grand duchess, the party was always too large to permit my adverting to the subject in her presence.

But in 1829 I beheld the grand duchess more nearly, and almost *tête-à-tête*, and had the means of obtaining from her the amplest confirmation of the account. The grand duke was dead. She had left the palace, and lived in dignified retirement, precisely in the way in which I had enjoyed so

much of the society of her illustrious predecessor, the Duchess Amelia, nearly thirty years before. It was easy to induce her to converse freely on an incident which she could not but be sensible had placed her character in an advantageous light for the present age and posterity. She said with unaffected simplicity, 'In my position I should have been contemptible had I not faced the danger.' On the whole, she said, Buonaparte behaved politely; adding with a smile, "*nach seiner Art*"—(*in his way*). She said also, and that was the only new circumstance I gathered from her, that Napoleon in one of his bursts exclaimed; "*Vous m'obligérez de me faire Empéreur de l'Occident;*" an amusing instance of his affectation of connecting his government and personality with those great events which occur only after a lapse of ages, and are recorded in the merest outline of universal history. He delighted to consider himself the successor of Charlemagne; and while chatting with the duchess could not help uttering his dreams of being the western emperor; allowing, for the moment, the Ottoman Court to preside over the empire of the east.

The great merit of the Grand Duchess Louisa lay in the perfect propriety and dignified prudence of her conduct. She *sustained* the distinction

which the Duchess Amelia had given to the court of Weimar, but was not her equal in activity of mind, and discrimination of taste. It was the Duchess-Mother who selected Wieland for her son, and who, late in life, maintained the most cordial intercourse with his venerable friend, to whom was associated in intimacy, Herder; while the grand duke's especial favour was given to Goethe and the younger Schiller.

H. C. R.

GOETHE,

AS SEEN IN HIS WORKS.

FROM THE

CONVERSATIONS-LEXICON,

AND SUPPLEMENT.

I think I cannot better close this humble attempt to gather together worthy materials for judging of the most remarkable character of our age, than by the following brief but able review of his vast and varied contributions to art, science, and letters. It is translated (with slight omissions) from the *Conversations-Lexicon*, to which I have often had occasion to refer, and which, though professedly a work of popular reference, is of established authority, and reckons among its contributors many very learned and eminent writers. The latter part, written since Goethe's death, appeared in the Supplement last November. It contains the most interesting as well as the newest matter, and indeed decided me on translating the whole article, with such condensation as I thought allowable.

S. A.

GOETHE,

AS SEEN IN HIS WORKS.

IF it be true that Germans have often been thankless to their great men, Goethe at least has little cause to complain of such ingratitude. Enthusiastic admiration awaited him from the appearance of his first work, and now, after the lapse of fifty years, it is hardly less fervent. Beloved by many, admired by all, deified by some, he has indeed been attacked by a few, but in that he only shared the lot of distinguished men of all ages and countries.

In order to form a correct judgment of him, we must first cast a rapid glance over what he has accomplished and created. Lyrical poems of the most varied character;

epigrams equally varied; songs, of a light, joyous cast; others, poured forth from a heart of the utmost sensibility; others again, in which deep, earnest meaning is hidden under a light veil; elegies, in the style and tone of the antients, and of the moderns; odes, some of them of the sublimest character; romances and ballads, some sweetly gay and cheerful, some terrible; not to mention a number of lyrical poems hardly to be classed under any of the recognized heads; idyls breathing the softest grace and depth of feeling; three novels, each of a different tone, spirit, and style; the sentimental-lyrical *Werther*, the domestic-epic *Wilhelm Meister*, the idyllic-comprehensive *Wahlverwandschaften*, with its deep moral significancy and its tragical catastrophe; tragedies, in each of which reigns a different spirit, each so unlike the other that they could hardly be suspected to be by the same author. *Goetz*

von Berlichingen, full of true-hearted old German simplicity, but also of old German vigour and pith — a Shakspearian composition, somewhat wild, but not without unity; *Egmont,* with all its truth and nature, yet wandering into the fantastic; *Clavigo,* which, in its domestic turn, recals the French drama; *Iphigenie,* pure and lofty in Greek ideality; *Tasso,* redolent of Italian warmth and softness; *Eugenie,* with its high polish; the *Grosskophta,* with its psychological acuteness; and *Faust,* unrivalled and alone—where in all these shall we discern the hand of a common master?

Not less various are the comedies and dramas: the *Mitschuldigen,* the *Laune des Verliebten,* with all their French lightness; *Stella,* with its southern glow; the *Geschwister,* with its German deep sincerity of feeling; *Ermin* and *Elvire,* with its romantic enthusiasm; the *Triumph der Empfindsamkeit*; the *Jahrmarkt zu Plunderswei-*

lern, with their wild, barroque humour, and yet wonderful force of truth, — who can trace any family resemblance among them?

Nor ought we to forget his operas and dramolets.

* * * * * * * * * * * *

To the drama, as it is seen, he devoted his pen the most, and yet is he no less remarkable as epic poet; whether we regard the fore-named three novels, or his Homerico-idyllic epos, *Hermann* and *Dorothea*, or the fragment of the *Achilleis*, or his refont of *Reinecke Fuchs*, or his fragment of a romantic epos, *Die Weissagungen*, or his smaller poetical tales and descriptions, such as *Hans Sachsens Sendung*, so perfectly in the spirit and manner of the hearty old *Meistersänger*. And that no part of the field of poetry might escape his culture, his epistles place him, as didactic poet, by the side of Horace. Such and so varied were the works of Goethe as a poet.

And what has he not done as a friend and critic of art? Nor is this all. We meet him in wholly heterogeneous regions, in physical science, in law, in theology. The latter we advert to chiefly because it has lately been the fashion to call Goethe's views of religion in question, and the leaning of a new æsthetical school to catholicism has been represented as proceeding from him. The observation forces itself upon us, that Goethe, by almost all he wrote, and scarcely less by what he *was*, acquired a mighty influence over the literature and the intellectual tendencies of his age; and is thus, in some sort, to be regarded as the central point whence the æsthetical and moral Being of Germany has taken its direction. His earliest productions, which overthrew all the traditional theories and unquestioned maxims of art, introduced a period which has been called, from one of Klinger's plays, "the storm

and violence period," and may justly be regarded as the storming of the German Parnassus and its French intrenchments. *Werther* introduced the sentimental period; *Goetz* gave rise to the throng of romances and dramas of chivalry, and held up Shakspeare as the model of our German poets.

Æsthetics were thoroughly revolutionary at this time; it is not necessary to ask whether manners were so, if we only recollect those whose hands *Werther* armed with a pistol (of which the poet indeed was guiltless enough); the shallow sentimentality, or the coarseness of tone and licentiousness of manners, which were prevalent. The influences which Goethe had created by the vigour and captivation of his genius, he himself overturned by the force of his satire, wit, and humour.

Then, as if transformed by a magic wand, he suddenly came upon the world in a

new character. His *Iphigenie* and his *Tasso* appeared in all the lofty glory of Greek ideality, no trace of which was perceptible in the more Shakspearian *Egmont*. In *Faust*, which combines within itself all the grandeur and all the beauty of Goethe's genius, he reached the summit of the poetic art. It is no matter of just surprise that these works did not produce any rapid effect; they struck deep, however, and, both in æsthetics and in ethics, people began to strive to approach the Ideal. How powerful was the effect of *Wilhelm Meister*, during the concluding ten years of the last century, is in the memory of all. Not only did novels of Art follow in great number, but the life of an artist assumed a higher import, and an æsthetic system arose, such as antiquity had divined but had never developed. Æsthetics appeared as the Perfecter of life and of philosophy. Ethics, or morals, took a subordinate station; but

religion, which had been made merely subservient to morals, rose above them, inasmuch as she was one with æsthetics. By æsthetics the mind was enabled to soar to religion;—it was impossible to be religious without being æsthetical; and a finely constituted soul (*eine schöne Seele*) could exist only in this state of profound æsthetico-religious feeling. Such were the effects Goethe produced upon us.

It cannot be questioned that a mind capable of producing such results must be one of most extraordinary power. Favouring accidents may, for a while, raise a man of moderate abilities over the heads of others; but circumstances change, and he sinks to his true level. Not so Goethe. The works of his imitators lie by hundreds in the tomb of oblivion, but the models are read, studied, admired, still; the periods in which *Goetz, Werther, Meister, &c.* were a fashion, are long past; but the works

have lost nothing of their power—a proof that they do not captivate by the charm of novelty, but by profound, intrinsic merit, by peculiar excellence, by that which avails in all civilized ages and nations.

[The critic here traces Goethe's life, principally from the autobiography, with a view to the various influences which wrought on his mind and works. As this would involve a good deal of repetition, and would touch on matters already before the English public, in one form or other, I shall only select such remarks as seems to me new and worthy of note.]

His works may be regarded as fragments of a grand general confession, which is completed in his biography.

Early had the significancy and pressure of the world forced themselves upon his mind. He had looked down into those subterranean labyrinths which run under the whole structure of civil society:—religion,

morals, law, connection, custom, rank, all these govern only the surface of civil life—externally, all pure and correct enough; internally, often only the more heartless and barren. Amid these grave and, for so young a man, fearful experiences, a sort of petulant humour sprang up in a mind that felt itself superior to the moment; not only he did not avoid danger, he wantonly courted it. Matter fitted for such a humour he took up and handled later. The interests of the heart ever appeared to him the weightiest; and he did not weary in meditating on the transitoriness of affection, on the changeableness of the human mind, and on the heights and the depths, the union of which in our nature may be regarded as the grand riddle of human life. His religious connection with the meek and pious Fraülein von Klettenburg had a strong influence on his mind and pursuits. His turn for the supersensual led him to the study of the

mystical and alchemical works of Welling, Theophrastus Paracelsus, Basilius Valentinus, and showed itself in a still more extraordinary form, when, on reading Arnold's history of the church and of heresies, (*Kirchen und Ketzerhistorie*) he fell upon the idea of making to himself a religion. Modern Platonism was the basis; hermetical, mystical, and cabalistical elements lent their aid; and he thus created to himself a world which certainly had an odd aspect enough.

His intimacy with Herder first led him to penetrate into the lofty sentiment of the Italian school of art, and to become acquainted with poetry under a totally new aspect, and one much more in harmony with his character.

The periods of his outward life are most intimately connected with the eras of his poetical life. In the latter we may distinguish three; we may call them the sen-

timental and intense; the ideal; and the elegant. In the former, *Goetz* and *Werther* had awakened universal astonishment and admiration. In these two works Goethe had found means to gratify his strongest propensities;—the one, for old German things and manners; the other, for the delineation of the joys and sorrows common to humanity, which agitated his bosom. Unquestionably in both *Werther* and *Goetz*, as subsequently in other works, the poet had some preconceived Idea to which he held—in the one, the fate of the young Jerusalem; in the other, the autobiography of the manly Goetz, of which we find whole passages in the drama. An attempt has been made, in consequence, to detract from his powers of invention. As if, the raw material being given, the demand for *poetical* invention were not just as great. And this displays itself in *Werther* and in *Goetz* in a remarkable manner. It is impossible

to overlook an æsthetic delineation of the characters, touched with the finest and most masterly strokes, any more than a developement of events converging to one point, and an arrangement of them that makes it appear as if all had flowed in one stream out of immediate perception or sensation; —as if it were rather a growth of nature than a work of art. Goethe had an extraordinary facility in throwing himself into foreign matter, even to utter self-forgetfulness; or in identifying himself with the delineations of others. Who ever caught every variety of tone and manner as he has done? His adoptions (if we may use the word) are not the result of slavish copying, but of the self-moving power of a most excitable fancy; nor, with all his faculty of exact imitation, does he ever sacrifice his independence and individuality of thought.

Goethe's songs have a character of transparency, and yet of depth; of tenderness,

and yet of light-breathed æsthetical beauty, the sweet magic of which every one has felt. In his ballads and romances, on the other hand, reigns that popular tone which had long been mute, and which breathed into German lyrics a fresh breath of life. If we look at the character of Goethe's works as a whole, we shall see that at this period it is national—full of that German spirit for which Lessing had fought so manly a fight, and which Goethe expressed with matchless felicity.

Twelve years now elapsed during which Goethe produced nothing very considerable. So much the greater was the astonishment which attended his reappearance. We must not think that all the works he published during this interval belonged to the *era* we have indicated. There was a sort of interregnum, during which he corrected and chastened his exuberant fancy by irony; during which he attuned the conflicting

powers of his discordant being to harmony. To this interval are to be referred the *Triumph der Empfindsamkeit* (Triumph of Sentimentality), the *Jahrmarkt zu Plundersweilern, &c.* He was now approaching nearer and nearer to the dominion of pure Beauty, who placed her most fragrant chaplet on his brow as he laid *Iphigenie* on her altar. With justice did A. W. von Schlegel call this 'an echo of Greek song.' Without any forced or artificial imitation of forms for ever past, for ever foreign to us, the spirit of Greece breathes through the whole work.

Tasso, though scarcely a drama in the strict sense of the word, is most admirable as a picture of character;—a poem on the Poet and his works, which Müller has justly called 'the most instructive, the most profound aid to the understanding of poetry.' Goethe alone could venture to pourtray Tasso; and it was only in this era that

even Goethe could have succeeded. Every thing was propitious. In the court of Amalie he found the materials for the accessories of his *Tasso*, and learned the tone suited to such circumstances. It is needless to enquire, therefore, whether Goethe the courtier and the statesman had not a material influence on Goethe the poet. Doubtless a very great one, and, as it appears to us, a very favourable one. Next to this court-life (such as it existed in Weimar) nothing produced a greater effect upon him than his travels and residence in Italy. During his first era, he had inclined to the Flemish school of art, to which, indeed, he never ceased to do justice;—but Italy opened his eyes to the full perception of high art; his rich, fertile spirit which embraced at once the Lofty and the Childlike and Lovely; his delicate, and at the same time profound, taste for nature and for art, now turned with love to the Noble and the Elevated.

In the place of his former principle of naturalness or reality, now arose that of ideality; but that pure ideality which transports nature into the region of Ideas and of pure Beauty. Of the three great works which fall within this era, *Wilhelm Meister*, *Faust*, and *Hermann* and *Dorothea*, the latter bears the strongest impress of this peculiar ideality. This epos has been so thoroughly elucidated by A. W. von Schlegel and Wilhelm von Humbold, that a word from us would be superfluous. *Wilhelm Meister* might take rank completely at its side, were it not unsatisfactory as a whole. What Goethe intended in it remains a mystery;—nor can any adequate judgment be pronounced of the unity or the integrity of the *Lehrjahre*, since the unfinished *Wanderjahre* throws no satisfactory light on the tendency of the whole. Nevertheless *Meister* must ever be considered one of Goethe's most admirable

works, for in that and in *Faust* are combined all the universality of his genius.

And that language, which pours forth like a plenteous and beautiful stream, in placid, crystal transparency, flowing in the loveliest windings; that style, like a beautiful body clothing the most delicate soul, so simple without homeliness or poverty, so elegant without finery, so correct without labour, so eloquent without rhetoric — where shall we find its like?

If, with reference to the Poet, we compare *Werther* with *Meister*, we see that in the former he is still wrestling with life and destiny; in the latter, that he has vanquished them, and has found the remedy for evil in a harmonious culture which may be regarded as the *tendency* of *Meister*.

By means of his passionless, serene, objective way of looking upon the world and upon life, a view of human things had opened upon him equally removed from

traditional onesided narrowness, and from preconceived theories: this led him to regard every thing as fitted to its place; to see the Individual in its connection and cooperation with the Whole; and, in human life, effort and action as the main duty and happiness. Of necessity, this threw a milder light on that dark point at which the threads of human existence are knit to a dim and fathomless destiny. This at length raised him to the idea of a *Theodicea** —and this we perceive in Faust—for we must be completely in error if Faust is not finally saved—if Heaven is not victorious over Hell. *Faust* is a philosophico-, or, if people will, a religious-didactic drama. The Highest and the Deepest, the Loveliest and the Saddest that can move the human heart, are laid before us; all pervaded by the profoundest spirit of poetry. Many have taken objections to the compo-

* Justice of God: title of a work of Leibnitz.—*Transl.*

sition of it as a whole (unhappily it is but a half), particularly because they could not divest themselves of the thought of the stage, for which this gigantic production was never intended. What would have been a misfortune for *Meister* is fortunate in *Faust*, — that the two periods or phases of the poet meet in it, and it thus belongs to both.

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Eugenie was intended to be a trilogy, but broke off at the first part. In a certain sense it may be called the poet's most perfect work; no other is so filed, so polished. Huber said, "marble-smooth, indeed, but also marble-cold." Every thing is given to form, and the metaphysical idealism is betrayed even in the *dramatis personæ*. They are mere abstractions. We see Goethe here and there; but the vigour and richness of his genius no longer reigns throughout, and the work is more elegant than beautiful.

The same can hardly be said of the *Wahlverwandtschaften,* which is distinguished by its masterly and exquisite delineations of character. The work has been blindly and unjustly censured as immoral. Edward is as little proposed to us as a model as Werther.

It may almost be said that the three styles of Greek sculpture have their parallel in Goethe's works; the first era marked by vastness and grandeur, but also by hardness; the second by beauty; the third by elegance.

The most valuable gift Goethe has bestowed upon us in recent times is his biography. It is full of frankness, truth, sincerity.

Never ought we to forget what Goethe has done for the fine arts, the drama, and for physical science; not as author alone, but by active encouragement. That he did not attain to the highest perfection in every

thing, is natural, and can hardly be mentioned as a reproach to him. But while Goethe continued in various ways to advance science and art in Germany, his later creations have thrown light on his own mind, the acquisitions and proportions of which seemed by no means completed. These have encouraged us to venture to try to fathom the whole man. For these works, in fact, contain much more than the fruits of the last five or six years, though it is only within that time that they have come to maturity. Among works of imagination and delineation (*Darstellung*) we must mention the *West-östliche Divan* and the *Wanderjahre*. They contain much that is purely didactic. The result of our observations on the works of this date is, that Goethe's scientific, now exceeded his creative and descriptive, activity. His scientific works are rich in conclusions on subjects of objective knowledge, and afford, at the

same time, curious glimpses of the depth of the author's nature. In all his later works, whether of art or science, we remark a growing harmony or reconcilement with life, and with the subject-matter of knowledge. The *Lehrjahre* was an attempt at a reconcilement with life as a Whole—but not a completely successful attempt. As the poet's doubts increase, the nearer he approaches to the result of the experiment in moral culture, so his work doubts; and our fairest expectations, from the situations and the views he has laid before us, are often suddenly baffled and overthrown by an uncontrollable burst of irony. A culture that finds nothing to cultivate; that wanting the substratum of a material susceptible of culture, produces only a sort of polished common-place; a developing process which fritters away and destroys its subject by multiplying aims and tendencies: on the other hand, a mysteriously

enfolded germ, justifying high anticipations, but crushed in its unfolding; these are the conflicting elements which come perpetually to view in the *Lehrjahre*. The conclusion is a tragical expiring breath of a life crushed under excessive or mistaken education; a mere scaffolding; a conventional character and condition; a theatrical combination of the features of life, and apprentice-rules dispel the rich throng of our early expectations. These are the results which crown so many toils! It is possible, indeed, that the poet, when he began to write, hoped to be enabled to draw a more satisfactory conclusion than that which, of necessity, closed his work. However, this detracts nothing from the merit of the work itself. Novels will perhaps never attain to their full significancy and importance, till the poet, instead of writing them according to any preconceived plan, is inspired by a genius which dictates the course

and turn of the incidents out of the course of his own life. Goethe's experience of external circumstances, of certain general results of labours directed to the formation of character, and sentiment for art, seems to have convinced him that they did not produce what they promised. This observation affords us an instructive clue, which leads the further if we bear in mind that much of the material for the *Lehrjahre* was prepared before the campaign in France, which he describes with such grace and beauty.

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Through all the songs of the *Divan* breathes the untroubled feeling of an unexpected reconcilement with Life, and a cheerful acquiescence in the conditions of our being. The period of time within which this collection of lyrical matter had birth is shown in the opening song. It is the period in which all was wreck and con-

fusion; thrones were overthrown, and nations panic-stricken. And now, when all seemed gloom and despair, the poet had fought through the fight with himself and the outer world; he had gained the power to penetrate with cheerful courage into the deep origin of things, in which men

"Noch von Gott empfingen Himmelslehr' in Erdensprachen,
Und sich nicht den Kopf zerbrachen."

(still received heavenly wisdom from God in earthly language, and did not distract their heads). The poet, become one with himself and with the world, stands firm against all outward shocks, and is nowise disheartened by them. Is it possible to be more perfectly and purely of good cheer than the poet of the *Divan*? But the work does not yet appear to have been rightly understood; for the cheerful feeling which pervades it from beginning to end has a very deep foundation; and this

is entirely the fruit of the time. The poet stands isolated and self-dependant. This, which had at first given Goethe such intense pain, has now lost its bitterness. He is become like one of those happy sages of the east, whose unclouded brightness and serenity of soul nothing temporal could disturb; who find their country every where, because peace and content reign in their own bosoms.

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In *Kunst und Alterthum* he attempts to approach the point whence every product of the human mind must be viewed, before a just and worthy judgment of it can be arrived at.

One peculiarity of Goethe is, that he is never more instructive than on subjects in which he is himself a learner. Never is this more true than when he studies the book of nature. He aims at nothing less than, in the place of that separation and dis-

memberment which science, for the convenient attainment of her ends, had adopted, both as to mental operations and objective phenomena, to discover a living band which might bind the scattered parts into a perfect Whole. The division of sciences had had this effect,—that each organ and each sense aimed only at apprehending every thing in its own way, and at setting that way up as superior to all others. Men forgot that the cooperation of all the powers and senses of the entire man was necessary to a comprehension of the Whole. We have to thank Goethe for this new method; for this deliverance of science from fetters, at a time when the need of a quickening breath was most pressing.

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As matter of history, we must mention the criticism which the infamous spurious *Wanderjahre* (Quedlinburg, 1821) pointed against the great master of German art

and science, with clamorous applause of the mob. This strange production is connected with that fashion of cant which would delight to drag the Beautiful and the True before the secret tribunal of one-sided morality and religious dogmatism. Goethe received it in silence, and the clamour ceased. The impudent prate of the Englishman Glover (whoever he be) is a disgrace to literature. But equally honourable to the Master and to the nation was the universal alarm and grief at the rumour of his late dangerous illness.

[Continuation since GOETHE's death.]

At length the time is come when we may bring to a close the remarks and criticisms on this most honoured and hallowed name of German literature. And if, so long as he

was numbered among the living and the working, mention of him in a book like this was indispensible, (since he never ceased to put forth new blossoms and to keep up a constant intellectual intercourse with the Present) it is now become a sacred duty once more to devote ourselves to the consideration of the collective tendency of his works, and to contemplate the entire mental form in which he gave himself for ever to German literature, in its eternal and complete proportions.

Goethe died on the 22d of March, 1832, after a catarrhal fever of three days, aged 82 years and seven months. His gentle death, following on an existence replete with vigour and grandeur of action, and variety and vivacity of enjoyment, may with as much reason be called happy, as his singularly favoured life; and however universal may be our grief, that he on whom rested the blessing of the German muse and the

love of the age, no longer tarries amongst us, it is rather a benign sorrow, a reverential tenderness, than an agitating distress; like his poetry, which breathes less of the stormy vehemence of grief than of a gentle melancholy controlled by reason.

When Schiller was cut off in the midst of life and exertion, a grief bordering on passion struck the heart of all Germany; every one felt that some hope of his own had died with Schiller. But Goethe had given to the world all that he had and was; he stood on the highest pinnacle humanity can reach; and thus was the destiny of man fulfilled in him by a gentle and natural dissolution.

Goethe's death has called forth a countless multitude of writings of every kind, which view him from the most varied aspects; nay among them there have not been wanting hostile pens which held Goethe's death the most appropriate mo-

ment for bringing before the public spiteful, detracting rumours concerning the private events and relations of his life*.

From all this, one remakable fact is evident;—that Goethe, above all writers that ever lived, had become so much the central point of his age, that the public regards the smallest addition to the knowledge of his character as a valuable acquisition.

What an abundance of interesting and ever new matter for contemplation his personal qualities afforded, is sufficiently shown by the well known work by Falk. On the same grounds—his fertility and his manysidedness—are the attacks to be explained which were occasionally made upon his character during his universally-active literary career. He must of necessity repel some while he attracted others. Hence the

* This alludes to a little work published anonymously called *Das Büchlein von Goethe*, and mentioned in another part of this work.—*Transl.*

different periods of appretiation and influence which the works of our poet alternately passed through. And this great diversity of opinion concerning them appears even in the third generation of his cotemporaries, (whose boundless love and enthusiastic admiration Goethe himself spoke of as a compensation for the injustice of some of his earlier critics) and leaves the final decision on his merits incomplete.

On the other hand, a period of a different character had lately arisen to him; an opposition whose leaders sought to try the poet's fame by a certain definite standard, and to determine the absolute value of his productions by the power of critical dialectic. This party might justly allege that criticism is restrained by none of those considerations of delicacy and kindness which ought to qualify our judgments of our neighbour in social and moral life; it rests on immutable laws which have all the power

of truth, and to which therefore all its decisions must bend. Unfortunately, however, criticism as applied to Goethe has scarcely ever been divested of passion; and even his most able opponents have alloyed the quality of their criticism by the obvious hostility with which they entered upon their task. The potent and indisputable influence of Goethe's poetic character, however, displayed itself rather negatively than positively. At this latest period of his life he devoted himself mainly to a more obvious and active participation in what was going on, and ceased to exercise any strong productive influence on the literature of his age. Nevertheless, by the renewed controversy, of which he was the subject, he occasioned a stir and excitement in the literary world which compels us still to regard him as the corner-stone of German literature; the central point round which all these contending parties revolved.

The opposition to Goethe began with a book which, though in itself utterly insignificant and worthless, served as a sort of key note to sounds which are not yet hushed. We mean the fictitious *Wanderjahre* (already mentioned above) in which a systematic sort of tissue of views and opinions, calculated to throw a shade over Goethe as man and as poet, was constructed. It was in fact only the old position which the *practical wisdom* of a narrow, stiff, vulgar, traditional* morality has, from the beginning of time, taken up against the expansive views of living poetry, and which were here reduced to a summary form; a sort of critical indictment against Goethe. It was impossible that this could suggest to him any new views of himself, or of his purposes and objects, since it was a mere repetition of what he had encountered in early life,—

* These words are an attempt at a paraphrase of *Philisterhaft.—Transl.*

namely when Nicolai and company raised the cry of narrow, conventional, worldly prudence against the large, practical wisdom of the poetry of Goethe. Meanwhile even Tieck esteemed the fictitious *Wanderjahre* worthy of mention (in his novel of the Betrothing—*die Verlobung*) and it is not to be denied that the views taken up in this work are not solitary and unsupported, but are derived from a very marked propensity of the age,—the wide-spread cant and prudery which constantly insists on confounding the free and lofty thoughts of poetry with the base corruptions of the world.

A more worthy and intelligent critic appeared in the person of Wolfgang Menzel (*Die Deutsche Literatur*, Stuttgard, 1833) and it cannot be denied that he very ably establishes the ethical point whence Goethe is to be viewed, with reference to the incontestible demands of the present age, and to the subjects on which his

writings seem at variance with those demands. It is curious that while this author was labouring to found a party against Goethe on ethical grounds, an admirer of the poet was engaged in an attempt to exalt him on precisely the same grounds; to point out the ramifications of profound ethical ideas which run through the whole of Goethe's writings, like beacons along the path of human life, and to arrange them in a sort of cyclical connection. We allude to Schubarth's works *Zur Beurtheilung Goethe's* (Aids to the judging of Goethe), and his *Vorlesungen über Faust* (Lectures on Faust).

We would suggest to both parties,—both the depretiators and the extollers of Goethe on ethical grounds (although they have come to a sort of agreement among themselves)—the consideration of the universally received law,—how little the ethical standard is fitted to aid in the judgment of

a poet, as Poet. Even in Schubarth's criticism—as it deals only with the abstract results of Goethe's poetry as a Whole—Goethe's peculiar and unrivalled merits *as an Artist* remain wholly unappretiated. As to the attempt to set up a new literary period in hostility to the spirit of a preceding one, (under which Goethe's poetry is included) we may be allowed to remark, that it is somewhat dangerous to brandish this supposed new æra, as a revolutionary weapon against the old one, since it has not yet emerged out of the chaos in which it is now struggling into existence.

Tieck, especially in his preface to Lenz's works*, enters into a defence of Goethe, rather indeed enthusiastic than critical; and regards him as the true founder and prop of German poetry. And this seems to be the tendency of his tale of the Moonseeker (*Der Mondsuchtige*) though it is unfortunately

* See Vol. ii. p. 148.

too unfinished and sketchy to make its aim very distinct.

The labours of the opposition, to which Börne lent his aid in his "Letters from Paris," had at least this negative utility,—that they tended to destroy the childish, romantic enthusiasm of the thoughtless multitude, which had always been very injurious to Goethe, and his impatience of which he used to express by his well-known deprecation, "Lord deliver me from my friends!" These stifling clouds and mists were cleared away from the sun by the stirring breath of criticism. Mere enthusiasm is ever the worst judge of art; some reasonable expectation might now be formed that a really profound and objective criticism of Goethe's works might assign that place in our literature to which he is incontestibly entitled.

While Goethe was the origin and the object of such various and contrary opi-

nions, he was uninterruptedly occupied, up to his last moment, in the endeavour to leave his manuscripts in an arranged and intelligible form. The last edition of his works, edited by himself, and the new things it contains—among which we may particularly mention the *Helena*, the *Tag- und-Jahres Hefte*, a second part of his *Italiänische Reise*, have been too fully discussed elsewhere to need mention here.

Among the posthumous works which we are led to hope for, is the correspondence with Zelter, which fills eight volumes, and is said to contain the fullest and most undisguised expression of his opinions; the most interesting communications and remarks on events and persons.

His scientific studies, particularly those views of nature so peculiar to himself, he pursued even at his advanced age; and directed a considerable portion of his attention to the French natural historians,

who on their part adopted many of his suggestions. A translation of his *Metamorphose der Pflanzen* by M. Soret*, which includes a history of his botanical studies, was published under his eye.

He was peculiarly interested in comparative anatomy, and his essay on the controversy between Cuvier and Geoffroy de St. Hilaire is remarkable, not only as being the last labour of his pen, but as containing a sort of confessions on the direction and developement of his scientific studies, which have a high biographical value. The *Métamorphose des Plantes* experienced the most honourable reception in France, especially from the *Académie*, to whom Geoffroy de St. Hilaire delivered an account of it, and Goethe's scientific correspondence with the most distinguished *sçavans* of France continued uninterrupted till his death. His

* The author of the article at the beginning of this volume.—*Transl.*

connection with foreign countries, and the admiration and appretiation of his poetical works, was perhaps the most extensive and honourable that ever author had reason to rejoice in. His reputation spread, particularly in later years, in France, England, and Italy; and we see the giant of our poetry gradually assume that universally-recognized form and station in European literature, which, with the prophetic spirit of genius, he foretels in his *Kunst und Alterthum.*

To what an extent, however, Goethe has impressed a stamp on the mental culture of Germany, will not be fully understood till much that is individual in his works shall have been long outlived. The real greatness of Goethe's poetry lies rather in the form than the matter; but it must be remembered that at the stage of German culture on which Goethe was destined to act, it was above all things requisite that

an attractive form should shed grace and glory round the difficulty of the matter. Goethe's talent was fitted, as no other ever was, to confer a matchless charm on all he touched. His was an æsthetically formed and forming nature, which appropriated to itself most felicitously the clearness, correctness, and truth of the antique; and so blended it with modern reflected images as to produce a seemingly profound harmonious unity; the picturesque plastic power of his genius transferred itself upon every object of life or of art, let him take it up on which side he would. Hence he always strives after the highest possible execution and finish of grace of form; nay, he often employs it the most on the obscurest material; as if to have the pleasure of seeing the Obscure gleam in all the radiance and magic of his delineation. Thus, in his novels, he took the social life of Germany in the eighteenth century, which still moved

in its stiff minuet-step; and *Wilhelm Meister* is the first book which exhibits a really social spirit, a really free and graceful tone of manners. The influence which this book has had cannot be more strongly described than by saying that it has passed into German society, and has raised and ennobled its tone.

Not less influential have been his lyrical poems,—especially his exquisite songs, which will live for ever on all lips and in all hearts,—in harmonizing the temper of his age; for a true music of the feelings, such as had never been heard in Germany, breathes through them all.

But while his lyrical poems expressed and excited the most beautiful and unconstrained pliancy and susceptibility of temper and of feelings, his dramas awakened a sense for refined, picturesque creation and grouping; for the chastest execution, the clearest and most vivid impress of the

Inward on the Outward, which scarcely ever belied its derivation from the plastic perfection of antiquity.

Thus, then, did Goethe foster and develope a true taste for art in Germany; and there exists not an individual amongst us who is not indebted to him for an essential part of his education.

Goethe's mortal features are most truly preserved to posterity in the celebrated bust by the French sculptor David*, which

* The following is the description of this bust by a French hand: it is taken from the last number of *Kunst und Alterthum*.

" Le buste de Goethe par David est beau comme celui de Châteaubriand, de Lamartine, de Cooper, comme toute application de génie à génie, comme l'œuvre d'un ciseau apte et puissant à la reproduction d'un de ces types créés tout exprès par la nature pour l'habitation d'une grande pensée.

" De toutes les ressemblances tentées avec plus ou moins de bonheur, dans tous les âges de cette longue gloire, depuis sa jeunesse de vingt ans jusqu'au buste de Rauch, le dernier et le mieux

is placed opposite to that of Schiller by Dannecker, in the library at Weimar. The

entendu de tous, ce n'est pas une prévention de dire que celui de David est le meilleur, ou, pour parler plus franchement encore, la seule reálisation de cette ressemblance idéale, qui n'est pas la chose, mais qui est plus que la chose, la nature prise au-dedans et retournée au dehors, la manifestation extérieure d'une intelligence divine passée à l'état d'écorce humaine. Et il est peu d'occasions comme celle-ci, où l'exécution colossale ne semble que l'indication impuissante d'un effet réel. Un front immense, sur lequel se dresse, comme des nuages, une épaisse touffe de cheveux argentés, un regard de haut en bas creux et immobile, un regard de Jupiter olympien, un nez de proportion large et de style antique, dans la ligne du front; puis cette bouche singulière avec la lèvre inférieure un peu avancée, cette bouche, tout examen, interrogation, et finesse, complétant le haut par le bas, le génie par la raison; sans autre piédestal que son cou musculeux, cette tête se penche comme voilée vers la terre: c'est l'heure où le génie couchant abaisse son régard vers ce monde qu'il éclaire encore d'un rayon d'adieu. Telle est la description grossière du buste de Goethe par David."

pedestal is adorned with the following lines by Schiller, which we adopt as the most appropriate motto to a life of Goethe:

" Selig, welchen die Götter, die gnädigen, vor der Geburt schon
Liebten, welchen als Kind Venus im Arme gewiegt,
Welchem Phöbus die Augen, die Lippen Hermes gelöset,
Und das Siegel der Macht Zeus auf die Stirne gedrückt!"

TRANSLATION.

Blest, whom the Gods, the gracious, even before his birth
Loved; whom, as child, Venus cradled in her arms;
Whose eyes Phœbus, whose lips Hermes unclosed,
On whose front Zeus stamped the seal of might.

NOTE. Page 227.

The following note was obligingly communicated with a view to the elucidation of the divergence of opinion between Goethe and Jacobi, and the influence of Spinoza's writings on the former, which forms the chief subject of Note 34, Vol. II.

Several reasons deterred me from availing myself of the author's kindness. I thought it would be esteemed either uninteresting or unintelligible by the greater number of readers; and that by the mere act of translating and inserting it, I might fall under the imputation of affecting to handle subjects, of which I know nothing.

But ever since I omitted it I have repented of my fears and scruples. There are doubtless some few to whom any help to the understanding of Goethe's neo-platonic doctrines will be welcome; for it is indisputable that this little compilation contains many allusions which want a key. Such views will probably appear very absurd and unsatisfactory to most persons; but the aim here is not controversy but history; and if we really desire to know the Man, and those influences which made him what he was, assuredly this (by his own confession one of the strongest) is not to

be passed over. Those who require that an author should reflect back upon them their own familiar thoughts, clad in varied dresses, and adorned with new-invented ornaments, will do well not to concern themselves with Goethe: he can be to them nothing but a wonder and a stumbling-block.

German literature is inextricably interwoven with German philosophy. There is not a fairy-tale of Tieck, not a song of Goethe, not a play of Schiller, not a criticism of Schlegel, not a description of Humbold, in which this under-current is not perceptible; nay, however paradoxical it may appear, I will venture to affirm that German music has received much of its peculiar character from the same source; that the compositions of Beethoven, Weber, Spohr, Mendelssohn, are deeply tinctured with the same spirit. It is as well to say this frankly, since those to whom such topics and such tendencies are unpalateable ought not to be betrayed into wasting their time.

In justice to the author I ought to add, that this is but the beginning of his paper. He went on to give a brief view of the system of Hegel, whose disciple he was for some years; but as the connection between this system and the main subject of the book was not obvious, I did not think I had any sufficient pretext for inserting it. The translation

is I hope tolerably faithful, as it has been submitted to the author.

"It is essential to the understanding of Goethe's theoretical system of Nature that we endeavour to gain some insight into modern German philosophy. In a work of this kind it is impossible to attempt to treat the subject in an exhaustive manner, or to go into a complete examination of the kindred systems. What follows is a mere sketch.

"In taking Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi as our text, and commencing our sketch of modern German philosophy with him, we are borne out by chronological accuracy, no less than by deeper reasons. Jacobi was the herald of the new faith. Though he was not the promulgator of a new system, he opened the way for all his successors by his vehement opposition to that popular philosophy, founded on the principle of *Dualism**, universally prevalent in his time, and partially since. His work was rather negative than positive. He discovered the weakness and insufficiency of the

* By Dualism is meant that system which divided the universe into antagonist parts, or principles, essentially distinct from, or opposed to, each other; as Matter and Spirit, God and Nature, Creator and Creation, Good and Evil, and so on.—*Transl.*

Kantian system; showed in all his writings, but especially in his letters on Spinoza, in answer to Moses Mendelssohn, the emptiness and barrenness of a system, the religious conceptions of which do not extend beyond a narrow and cold morality; which sees nothing in Christianity but a code of duties; and represents the Creator of the universe as a mere Supreme Being—*Deus extramundanus*—, apart from his creation and from man.

" Jacobi's profound religious feeling—his truly speculative turn of mind—rendered this doctrine intolerable to him. But he fell into the contrary extreme; he denounced philosophy generally, and declared revealed religion to be the sole and exclusive source of truth. These opinions he pronounced with the greatest vehemence and distinctness in his work directed against Schelling—*Von den göttlichen Dingen und ihren Offenbarung* *, (1811.) Here he expressly declares it as his opinion, that philosophy is impotent to clear up the eternal mystery; and that we receive light through divine grace alone, and not through human reason. This unconditioned, abrupt, and one-sided view of the question, this despair of all philosophy, this orthodox scepticism, can be explained only from the

* Of divine things, and their revelation. See Vol. ii, Note 34.

disgust which at that period was necessarily excited in every mind of a profounder cast, by the everlasting preaching of the *Rational Philosophy* then in vogue. But this disgust rendered Jacobi unjust; he denounced the innocent with the guilty; and Schelling, as we shall hereafter see, least of all deserved to be thus attacked by him. For it cannot be denied that the Kantian school seemed to have a somewhat anti-religious tendency; that, pushed to extremity by Fichte, it seemed to aim at setting up philosophy, and the system of morals deduced from it, as teacher and pattern for the human race, in the place of religion.

"'This theory,' says Mr. Coleridge (speaking of Fichte's system), 'degenerated into a crude egoismus, a boastful and hyperstoic hostility to nature, as lifeless, godless, and altogether unholy: while his religion consisted in the assumption of a mere ORDO ORDINANS, which we were permitted to call GOD; and his ethics into an ascetic and almost monkish mortification of the natural passions and desires*.'

"But Schelling, on the other hand, had so decidedly quitted this track; he had striven so sincerely after a deeper point of union between religion and philosophy, that we must admit that Jacobi,

* Biographia Literaria, Vol. i. p. 148.

in the excess of his zeal, entirely misunderstood him. It was reserved for a later period to do him justice.

"With Schelling then began a thorough reform; he is to be regarded as the true author of that recent direction of philosophy of which Jacobi was but the herald and the messenger. It will be necessary to the understanding either of Schelling or of Goethe, to make a brief mention of Spinoza, whose system, so long forgotten, and now suddenly called forth into notice, exercised the greatest influence on the whole of the recent philosophy.

"The prejudice against him arising from misapprehension and ignorance had caused him to be entirely neglected. Denounced by priests as an Atheist, his works had been prohibited. The distinguished philologist Paulus* published a good edition of his works, and Jacobi first, on philosophical grounds, called attention to these long forgotten opinions. But Jacobi laid the foundation for a new prejudice, by accusing Spinoza of Pantheism. We shall see with what justice.

"According to Spinoza, God is both *Natura naturans*, and *Natura naturata*, τὸ ἕν καὶ τὸ πᾶν, Creator and creation, spirit and world. '*Natura*

* See Professor Paulus's Preface, in which the complete oblivion of these works is shown.

naturans et naturata in identitate Deus est; aut quatenus ut causa *libera consideratur, aut quatenus modi ut res ponuntur, quæ in Deo sunt, et quæ sine Deo nec esse nec concipi possunt. Ab omni eternitate* finitum *apud* infinitum *erat, alioquin* finitarum *rerum exordium* creatio ex nihilo *esset. Finitum sine infinito non potest existere, sin secus res finitæ aut substantiam facerent aut ex nihilo procreatæ essent, quod utrumque absurdum est. Deus est sine ulla relatione universi causa immanens.*'

"This doctrine of the identity of God with the world, which solves the most difficult of all problems, and which (consciously or unconsciously) has been the fundamental perception of all great minds, has no where been so distinctly expressed. By conceiving of dead matter as instinct with the true source of all life, God and Nature (*i. e.* creation) no longer appeared as two conceptions fundamentally and eternally distinct and opposed; a view of the subject, indeed, affording a facility for systematizing which the popular philosophers of the preceding century had abundantly misused. But a more living breath now moved through and vivified the Whole.

The doctrine was, notwithstanding, at first denounced as heretical. It was represented as ren-

dering God an object of sense, and Nature an object of worship. But Spinoza had long ago guarded himself against this unjust charge of rendering finite the Infinite, by the words, '*Substantia non potest dividi.*' The *Idea immanens*, therefore, the true spiritual existence, the living principle in matter, is, according to him, God; not this or that *part* of matter, which is a mere attribute. And the Whole is not a collection or conglomeration of these countless attributes, but the Idea—the spiritual band of all individuals, which of themselves have no proper being. '*Deum rerum omnium causam* immanentem *non vero* transeuntem *statuo. Omnia inquam in Deo esse et Deo moveri cum Paulo affirmo, licet alio modo.*'

"Spinoza would have found his best defender in St. Augustin, the most profound thinker among all the fathers of the Church. In his work, *De diversis questionibus*, he says (in perfect accordance with Spinoza), "Substantialiter *Deus ubique diffusus est. Sed sic est Deus per cuncta diffusus, ut non sit qualitas mundi, sed substantia creatrix mundi, sine labore regens, et sine onere continens mundum. Non tamen per* spatia *locorum, quasi mole diffusa, ita ut in dimidio mundi corpore sit dimidius, atque* ita *per totum totus; sed in solo cœlo totus, et in s. lâ terrâ totus, et in cœlo et in*

terrâ totus, et nullo contentus loco, sed in se ipso ubique totus.'

"This *Substantia* or *Spiritus immanens* is a far profounder conception than the *Deus extra-mundanus* of the popular philosophy;—an imperfect, vague Being estranged from the creation. This idea Goethe has beautifully expressed in the lines quoted in a former part of this work. (See Vol. ii. p. 198.)

"Only when conceived in this immanence—only as *Deus immundanus*, is the Godhead full and complete. The passages quoted from Spinoza will suffice to rescue him from the charge of Atheism, as well as from that of the coarse and material Pantheism which was the peculiar growth of the East, and is to be found in the Persian and Indian poets. With equal justice might Spinoza have been accused of Akosmism. But if we are justified in regarding such accusations as the fruit of a mere school-controversy, a dispute about names, another question arises which is not so easily disposed of: namely, that the doctrine, that all will be absorbed in God, if pushed to its full extent, reaches a point at which the freedom of the individual will seems annihilated.

"But we cannot discuss this here.

"Schelling differs from Spinoza less in the

matter of his philosophical opinions than in the form of his statement. Spinoza is, in form, strictly mathematical, his proofs are laborious and accurate deductions. Schelling's works are full of the fire of youth and creative genius. In many respects he may be compared to Plato; and as we find in the history of every system of philosophy that the imaginative, creative Plato is followed by the strictly scientific, dogmatic Aristotle, so was Schelling's system destined to be carried forward by a powerful and profound mind of the latter class.

"Schelling began his career by opposing the abstract idealism of Fichte, who derived the Objective from the Subjective; he (Schelling) leaned to the side of that realism which combines the perception of the spirit with the perception of nature. From the very title of one of his principal works, *Von der Weltseele**, ('Of the Soul of the world,' published 1798) the fundamental principles of Spinoza are obvious. But it cannot, on that account, be asserted that his is a mere natural philosophy, and that it exhibits nature (*Natura natu-*

* In natural history I found much to think, to observe, and to do. Schelling's *Weltseele* occupied our highest powers of thought (mind). We saw it now in the eternal metamorphoses of the outer world embodied anew.—*Tag-und-Jahres Hefte, A. D.* 1798.—*Transl.*

rata) as the highest object of contemplation. In 1800, in order to guard against this supposed predominance of the Real over the Ideal, he published his *System des transcendentalen Idealismus*. But, with him, Idealism and Realism are identical*, they are necessarily and inextricably connected, and their separation would be destructive of his fundamental idea—the idea of the Absolute, to which the Ideal and the Real are subordinated. Hence Schelling's system was called the Doctrine of Identity, or the Philosophy of the Absolute.

"He did not follow the usual practise of working out his system in distinct branches of philosophy; his ardent genius led him to embrace the whole domain of knowledge from one point.

"He reconciled religion with philosophy; for he founded the latter on the Idea of God as the Ab-

* The expression *identical*, which in common parlance is used as synonymous with *the same*, must, in philosophical language, be restored to its original meaning. *Identical* means neither *equal*, nor *the same*, nor even *co-incident*:—if it is said of two notions that they are *identical*, they can be so in no other way than identified in a third fundamental notion, of which they are merely the offspring. Here, for instance, the *Absolute*, in which the *Ideal* and the *Real* are *identical* (not *one* the same as the *other*, a ridiculous and contradictory abuse of the word *identical*).

solute, whereas Kant and Fichte had proceeded from subjective consciousness to the comprehension of the All. His fundamental doctrines are,

"The Absolute, God, is Being and Knowing in one, without division or separation; from whom all creation is produced by means of division, and into whom all returns by means of reunion (dissolution)*. All real Being is of divine, spiritual nature, and cannot be annihilated, only dissolved.

"All things participate in the divine *Being*, they are separated from it and from each other in the Real—only quantitively. The Absolute has revealed itself in Time and Space by self-division. Only by the way of limitation is a creation of the Infinite attainable. The Infinite in its existence and appearance is limited, circumscribed, *i. e.* the Real. The universe is a perfected organism in which all things that seem opposed are re-united without destruction of either. This highest reunion is the self-revelation of God. Man is the most perfect copy of this universe—a world in himself—Microcosm.

"Thus we see that Schelling is not a dualist, he does not presume Opposition as the basis of his system, but Unity. Being and Knowing with him lapse into one; the Objective contains the Sub-

* Vide Vol. i. p. 74.

jective within itself; and each beholds itself in the other, *tanquam in speculo.*

"Coleridge, in his *Biographia Literaria,* vol. i. p.257, says, "The necessary tendency of all natural philosophy is from nature to intelligence."

* * * * * * * * * * * * * *

"This theory would then be completed, when all nature was demonstrated to be identical in essence with that which, in its highest known power, exists in man as intelligence and self consciousness; when the heavens and the earth shall declare not only the power of their Maker, but the glory and the *presence* of their God.

"Schelling's acquaintance with physical science, which was considerable, enabled him to trace this principle in the particulars of the organic Whole. He thus introduced a light into the leading theories of physics of which traces are to be found even in England, where the mechanical tendence is so generally predominant. These traces are visible in a work by Richard Saumarez.

"But not less remarkable was his influence on theology. Those twin sisters, religion and philosophy, so long severed and as it was thought opposed, were shown to be reconcileable, and it is impossible to conceive the joy with which this change was hailed in Germany. The enthusiasm

was universal. The noble Jean Paul uttered these prophetic words, 'My most deep conviction is that the new school not only is right, but that it will endure. This morning glow is the harbinger of a fairer poetical spring.' Thus he wrote in the Preface to his *Æsthetik*.

"And he prophecied truly. The influence on Art generally has been most favourable, although it cannot be denied that some excitable spirits have been hurried into extravagance*."

The following short poems have reference to the subject discussed in this note. I do not attempt to translate them. They have the sublime simplicity, the bold flight, and awful beauty of a psalm, and ought not to be translated by any one who cannot invest the thoughts with a clothing as majestic.

* "The grand schism which had taken place in German literature had a great influence on our dramatic affairs, particularly from the vicinity of Jena. I kept on the same side with Schiller; we gave in our adhesion to the new philosophy, and the æsthetical system arising out of it."—*Tag-und-Jahres Hefte*, 1802.

Gott und Welt.

Procœmion.

Im Namen dessen der Sich selbst erschuf!
Von Ewigkeit in schaffendem Beruf;
In Seinem Namen der den Glauben schafft,
Vertrauen, Liebe, Thätigkeit und Kraft;
In Jenes Namen, der, so oft genannt,
Dem Wesen nach blieb immer unbekannt.

So weit das Ohr, so weit das Auge reicht
Du findest nur Bekanntes das Ihm gleicht,
Und deines Geistes höchster Feuerflug
Hat schon am Gleichniss, hat am Bild genug;
Es zieht dich an, es reiost dich heiter fort,
Und wo du wandelst schmückt sich Weg und Ort:
Du zählst nicht mehr, berechnest keine Zeit,
Und jeder Schritt ist Unermesslichkeit*.

From the *Zahme Xenien.*

Das Leben wohnt in jedem Sterne:
Er wandelt mit den andern gerne
Die selbsterwählte reine Bahn;
Im innern Erdenball pulsiren
Die Kräfte, die zur Nacht uns führen
Und wieder zu dem Tag heran.

* Here follow the lines quoted in Vol. II. p. 198.

Wenn im Unendlichen dasselbe
Sich wiederholend ewig fliesst,
Das tausendfältige Gewölbe
Sich kräftig in einander schliesst;
Strömt Lebenslust aus allen Dingen,
Dem kleinsten wie dem grössten Stern,
Und alles Drängen, alles Ringen
Ist ewige Ruh' in Gott dem Herrn.

——— allherschend waltet Schwere
Nicht verdammt zu Tod und Ruh'
Vom lebendigen Gott lebendig,
Durch den Geist, der alles regt,
Wechselt sie, nicht unbeständig,
Immer in sich selbst bewegt.

EXTRACTS

FROM THE POSTHUMOUS NUMBER OF

KUNST UND ALTERTHUM.

THE short papers or extracts which follow are contained in the last and posthumous number of *Kunst und Alterthum*, which I have just received. It is, as might be expected, almost exclusively devoted to the memory of its illustrious founder. The work has now, I believe, expired. Goethe's true and graceful description of the fountain shows that he had lost nothing of that painter's eye, that exquisite sense of beauty, harmony, and significancy of form and colour which disposed every group and animated every scene he drew. His address to the youthful poets of Germany is characterized by another of his most striking qualities —practical good sense.

Varnhagen von Ense's observations on Goethe's views of the structure of social life come recom-

mended in no ordinary degree by the opportunity and capacity for judging of them possessed by the accomplished author. The remarks of such a man as Wilhelm von Humbold have an interest as being his, independant of their merit; and the conclusion, by Friedrich von Müller, containing as it does a passage from Goethe which breathes the purest and most enlarged philanthropy, forms an appropriate and affecting close to these records of his life and works.

EXTRACTS,

&c.

THE following remarks are from an article by Varnhagen von Ense, which I regret I cannot give entire. I have quoted it chiefly with a view to Goethe's political opinions (or want of them), which have been made the subject of so much discussion and censure.

"If all that has been written on *Wilhelm Meister's Lehrjahre* since its first appearance were collected, it would form a voluminous work. The Poet suffered all this—the censure and the praise, the good will and the malignity—to pass by him in perfect silence. He never expressed how far any criticism coincided with his own opinion, or otherwise. The only means he took to explain his meaning, or to correct his critics, was by continuing his work; and after an interval of twenty years the *Wanderjahre* appeared.

"What has been said of Shakespeare—that he stood on the confines of two eras of the world—is equally applicable to Goethe. His life and writings

unquestionably belong to a division or section of time which may be properly characterized as the age of decay and destruction, as opposed to creation and construction. The latter half of the eighteenth, and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, may be regarded as the crisis of a period which events had long prepared. Whatever may be the general results, it is certain that private life was filled with the deepest sufferings, shaken by the storm, and often utterly wrecked.

" It was the province of Poetry to seize this picture of life, and to preserve it embodied in eternal forms, faithful and vivid.

" The whole product of Goethe's imagination is scarcely anything else than the picture of the convulsions of a world divided against itself; and if on the one hand he softens the harsh features of this division by the magic and the grace of his genius as an artist; if by the force of the spirit of truth that was in him he depicted all that existed, recognized its claims to exist, and thus reconciled and harmonized the jarring elements, he was compelled by this same spirit of truth to drag many a contradiction that had lain concealed, out of its dark abode, and to place it in a sharp and distinct light.

" In this position—in this task—of the poet, lies

the answer to all the absurd demands and reproaches which narrow minds, impatient of all they cannot understand, have made and will make, on the score of morality. Morality, however, in its loftiest form, inheres in all his works, even where it seems most wanting to their dim eyes.

" For the breaking up and dissolution of the old forms of society, which, long diseased and baneful, had sought to bind fresh life to their own death, and the new unfolding forms which had as yet no sanction,—these are the elements which Poetry must of necessity deal with at such an epoch. Hence the mass of cotemporaries may indeed admire the poet, but are incapable of fully understanding him; they will blame his views and his intentions; but a future age infallibly does him justice, and recognizes that, amid all the perils of the heart and aberrations of the mind, the Artist remained innocent and virtuous; amid all the excesses of sensuality, chaste and pure; like the spiritual teacher who shuns not to trace out every fault and backsliding, to call each by its true name and quality, nor to plunge down into the depths of night to rescue the soul which he brings back to the light of day. No otherwise does the Poet, in so far as he really is one; he can cease to be moral only where he ceases to be a poet.

"Early was Goethe aware of the perplexity and confusion of a world at variance with itself, in the midst of which he was born and grew to manhood. The first works of his genius, Werther, Goetz, Faust, Stella, betray the agitation of an inward life impatiently struggling with the forms imposed by the outer world; which can neither conform to them nor be circumscribed by them, and yet utterly wants the new forms in which it might freely expand and be at peace. This struggle, a ceaseless, ever-recurring, fundamental theme, shows itself in all the succeeding works of Goethe in the most varied and the loftiest forms. *Egmont, Tasso, Herrmann und Dorothea, Die Natürliche Tochter,* nay even *Iphigenie* (in so far as the Present breathes and moves, like a secret breath of life, through this exquisite resuscitation of the Antique), the *Wahlverwandschaften,* and especially *Wilhelm Meister,* are closely connected members of one and the same series.

"That in our age man is born not into a free natural state, but into an artificial world, intersected and divided in all directions by boundary lines; long appropriated, and cumbered by successive heaps of dead matter, deaf or hostile to the claims of intellect or of character; that the new forms of existence are yet without any firm foot-

ing, entangled in an artificial inextricable web, in which the better part too often is destroyed or languishes; this insight was peculiar to the author of *Werther*. But here despair stands fixed, and finds no other outlet than what self-destruction offers. In his later works comfort and healing are found. In *Faust* and *Wilhelm Meister* this tendency comes clearly to light. Here, for the Spiritual, victory is achieved; the Rebellious is brought back to allegiance; the Severed is reconciled. There, for the Earthly, new forms of existence are suggested, calculated to render it tranquil, satisfied from within and from without.

"The Poet, in whose mid life occurred the mighty event of the French Revolution, which toils and struggles in, or against, the same opposing or hostile matter with himself, only with the most violent and frightful weapons, stands directly opposed to it, inasmuch as the only means he would employ for the solution of the great problem laid before the world were culture, insight, benevolence. If he took up arms at all, it would be against that very revolutionary force, which is hateful to him under every form, precisely because it advances its cause only by destruction. But progress in living developement of mind; the ennobling and refining of all existing institutions; the pu-

rifying and harmonizing of the world, were the objects of his unintermitted and fervent zeal; and the forward glance he loved to cast into an improved and improving Future, severed him for ever from those mischievous dreamers who stubbornly look back to an inapplicable Past as the blessing we must strive to regain. The rays of light which are thrown out in the *Lehrjahre*, on difference of ranks; on the conditions attending property in the soil; or the accordance between capacity and the choice of a profession, have seldom found due consideration; often, entire misapprehension. The Poet's object is not to hold to the Obsolete in defiance of the regular, onward course of nature; not to crush the demands of a new mental impulse; but he would fain keep a hold on the Actual, knit the New securely to it, and give to them conjointly a just direction.

" He values the Permanent, but he knows how to trace it even in the midst of change; he recognizes motion as the true element of humanity, and principle of the universe.

" All this is clearly expressed in the *Wanderjahre*, and a comprehensive view of a new order of things is drawn in firm though not rigid characters, with poetical freedom.

" This book is not to be regarded as a mere

sport of imagination. The Poet has transferred all the serious difficulties of Reality into his fiction; and it is in the grandest sense a didactic work. The necessities of daily life take their rank by the side of the highest elevation of mind; Christianity works in the form of mild piety; education spreads out her establishments, powerful and all-comprehensive; the taste for Art, richly bestowed on individuals, becomes an universal advantage; the mechanical arts and trades, led by wise arrangements from their destructive rivalry, take their station without fear by the side of the higher arts, certain of receiving from them due honour and appretiation; natural disposition and capacity determine and ennoble every occupation. The false and incongruous position of women disappears before rightly assorted marriages, which bring together unequal classes. They are exalted into free ministers of a religion of love and beneficence.

"A new estimate of things and of actions, a new choice and distribution of the lots of life, a new sense of the Good and the Beautiful, are disclosed by means of an association extending over the whole earth, full of liberal activity, of respect for the Highest and for the Least; busied in extinguishing crime and want, and affording the rich prospect of mankind advancing in culture and in

industry; whose maxim may be, In worldly things, for every member a fair share in the possession and enjoyment of the stock of Good existing; in what relates to mind and disposition, where so much is impossible, and must for ever remain prohibited, the liberation of the prohibited Possible from those fetters which can be broken.

"But we must conclude. Space for observations of every kind extends to infinity; but the opinions and views which could here be arrived at would be fruitful only to those who shun not the labour of measuring that space with their own footsteps.

K. A. VARNHAGEN von ENSE."

The following few remarks from the pen of one of Goethe's most intimate friends and distinguished cotemporaries, Wilhelm von Humbold, are extracted from an article entitled, "On the peculiar character of Goethe's influence on Art and Science."

"Among Goethe's noblest characteristics we may mention his indefatigable exertions to stimulate the intellectual activity of his cotemporaries.

We may indeed affirm, that unintentionally, and even unconsciously, his mere existence, and his labours for the improvement of his own mind, exercised that powerful influence which so peculiarly distinguished him.

" This is distinct too from what he did and produced as thinker and as poet; it lies in his great and singular personal qualities. We are conscious of this from the very grief we feel for his loss. We lament in him not only the creator of so many master-works of various kinds; not only the enquirer who extended the empire of several sciences, and with profound penetration marked out new paths to their inmost depths; not only the ever-sympathizing promoter of every effort directed to the cultivation of the mind. Independently of all these claims on our regret, we feel that, from the mere circumstance of his being no longer among us, somewhat of our inmost thoughts and feelings is taken from us, and exactly in their most elevating relation. But while we are painfully sensible of this, we are cheered by the persuasion, that he has implanted germs in his age and nation of which future generations will see the unfolding and reap the fruits, even after the language in which he wrote shall have become obsolete.

" In every nation which has attained to a high

point of civilization there is a certain community of ideas and sentiments which surrounds it like an intellectual atmosphere. This is not founded on any special, fixed, and determinate opinions; it arises much more from the general tone or tendency of all collectively; from the general mode of apprehending the inner and the outer world.

"Goethe's individual character was precisely fitted to operate on this point. By the power of his poetic genius, and of that language which could alone have furnished him with the means of expressing his own peculiar character of mind, and on which he in turn stamped such an impress of vigour and of soul, he penetrated to that mysterious central depth, at which *one* intellectual impulse animates a whole nation.

"Thus, commencing at a period when our literature was little clear or precise, he impressed on the spirit of German art and science a new stamp which will render his memory eternal. The ever-cheerful wisdom; the lucid clearness; the vivid intense perception of nature, with which are blended the forms of art, or images drawn from some deeper source; the greatest spontaneity of genius; all these most singular and distinguishing properties attracted and modelled all minds without an effort. In no man was there ever a greater aversion, based

on his deepest peculiarities, of every thing entangled, abstruse, and mystical. This rendered his influence at once so universal, so facile, yet so profound. What presented itself in colours so bright and vivid, what gushed from its fountain-head in such plenteous facility and beauty, was caught and retained with equal ease, and was again diffused in other directions.

"As Goethe always looked at Nature in the unity of her organization, and in the full development of her rich variety of forms, the world of thought and that of sense could never stand opposed in abrupt antagonism in his mind. Reality only surrendered her own shape in order to receive a new one from the hand of creative fancy. Hence, to return to our main subject, was he such a benefactor to Art. He was allied to it by every faculty of his mind; he had cultivated it by observation, by collection, by practice; the universal sense of Art was deeper rooted in him than in any other human being that ever existed.

"He did an immense deal for Art *immediately* by instruction, encouragement, and assistance of every kind; but all this was far outweighed by what she owed to him *mediately*. He prepared the soil for her in the minds of all his cotemporaries, by the silent operation of a long life pervaded by,

and devoted to, her; waked the slumbering sparks of love to her, and directed the taste and the encouragement he called forth, to those labours alone which, equally removed from the constraint of cramping rules and the extravagance of fantastic caprice, follow the free but yet regular course of Nature.

WILHELM von HUMBOLD."

Reply to Herr G. D. R. R. SCHULTZ, of Bonn, on the Objective and Subjective in Art.

"Weimar, September 18, 1831.

"To make some reply to your valuable and interesting letter, respected friend, I begin thus:

"On the open space, in front of my house, stands a large handsome basin, abundantly supplied with water flowing into it from pipes. Hither come, especially at morning and evening, women and girls, lads and children, to fetch this needful ingredient of their existence.

"Here the action is simple and yet varied; the water is dipped out of the basin, poured into tubs, and carried away on the back, for purposes of clean-

liness; for drinking, jugs are placed under the pipes; for cooking, and the lighter houshold wants, pails are pushed under them. Hence the attitude and gesture of the actors and waiters are never the same; the variety of posture is infinite; the position of the one who is in the act of drawing the water, as well as that of the others who are waiting for the moment when it shall come to their turn, show no trace of impatience; all goes on in order, and yet there is a perceptible difference between the one and the other. It is strictly forbidden by the police to wash vegetables at this place. Pity! That afforded very pretty domestic groups. However, enough still remains, — from the solitary comer at early morning, to the throng in the later hours of the day;—and now the fountain stands once more deserted, till at last a boy climbs upon the edge of the basin, and bending down over the pipe quenches his thirst immediately at the source.

"Here now is an opportunity for the artist (*der bildende Künstler*) to show what he were able to see, to apprehend, to select, to imitate. Here he may study an act or occupation indispensable to man, at all its moments, each of which is important; many, pertinent, beautiful, graceful, and in the best sentiment and style. And thus we should have one case which might stand for a thousand,

from which it would be evident that without immediate union of Object and Subject no living work of art can be produced.

"I thank the critical and idealistic philosophy that it made me observant of myself: that is an enormous gain. It does not, however, supply the Object; that we must take for granted, as well as the ordinary intelligence of man requisite to enjoy the pleasantness of life in our unchangeable relation to it.

"I hope these most hasty suggestions will find my honoured friend safely arrived in Bonn, and induce him, from time to time, to give me news of his valued health and thoughts.

GOETHE."

Extract from a LETTER to MEYER, on the conclusion of *Faust*.

"Weimar, July 20, 1831.

——— "I have now arranged the second part of *Faust*, which, during the last four years, I have taken up again in earnest,—filled up chasms and connected together the matter I had ready by me, from beginning to end.

"I hope I have succeeded in obliterating all difference between Earlier and Later.

"I have known for a long time *what* I wanted, and even *how* I wanted it, and have borne it about within me for so many years as an inward tale of wonder—but I only executed portions which from time to time peculiarly attracted me. This second part, then, must not and could not be so fragmentary as the first. The reason has more claim upon it, as has been seen in the part already printed. It has indeed at last required a most vigorous determination to work up the whole together in such a manner that it could stand before a cultivated mind. I therefore made a firm resolution that it should be finished before my birthday. And so it was; the whole lies before me, and I have only trifles to alter. And thus I seal it up; and then it may increase the specific gravity of my succeeding volumes, be they what they may.

"If it contains problems enough (inasmuch as, like the history of man, the last solved problem ever produces a new one to solve), it will nevertheless please those who understand by a gesture, a wink, a slight indication. *They* will find in it more than I could give.

"And thus is a heavy stone now rolled over the summit of the mountain, and down on the other

side. Others however still lie behind me, which must be pushed onwards, that it may be fulfilled which was written, 'Such labour hath God appointed to man.'

"His majesty the king of Würtemberg did me the honour to come and spend an hour and a half with me. Fortunately I was in good spirits, and disposed to talk freely, so that he seemed pleased with his visit.

"In my studies of nature I have been wonderfully assisted: we may call it accidental; but in truth, if one goes on consequentially in a study, the Outer and Living always attaches itself to the Inner, and they grow together.

"Herewith you have my repeated best wishes for your happy journey and glad return.

GOETHE."

"To the YOUTHFUL POETS of Germany.

"But too frequently are German poems sent to me with the wish that I would not only criticise the work, but give my thoughts on the true poetical vocation of the poet. However flattered I may be by such marks of confidence, it is impossible for

me to give a suitable reply in writing to each of these applications;—it would, indeed, be difficult enough to answer them by word of mouth. As, however, these missives have a sort of general agreement or resemblance, I may venture here to make some remarks which may be of future usefulness.

"The German language has attained to such a pitch of cultivation and polish, that any man may succeed in expressing himself well and happily—in proportion to the subject or the sentiment—either in prose or verse, according to his ability. Hence it follows that every man, who, by hearing or by reading, has cultivated his mind up to that point at which he becomes in some degree intelligible to himself, feels himself immediately impelled to communicate to others his thoughts and opinions, his perceptions and his feelings.

"It were difficult, perhaps impossible, for a young man to perceive that by this, little, in any higher sense, is accomplished. If we observe such productions accurately, all that passes in the inward man, all that concerns the person himself, appears more or less successfully accomplished; in many cases so successfully that it is as deep as it is luminous, as correct as it is elegant. All that is general—the highest modes of existence and the

love of country; boundless nature, as well as her individual exquisite features,—surprize us here and there in the poems of young men; and we can neither fail to recognize their moral value, nor withhold our praise from their execution.

"Herein, however, lies the danger; for many who are travelling the same road will join company, and enter upon a pleasant excursion together, without trying themselves well, and examining whether their goal lie not all too far in the blue distance.

"For alas! an observant well-wisher has very soon cause to remark, that the deep-felt complacency of youth suddenly fails; that mourning over vanished joys, regret for the Lost, longing for the Unknown, the Unfound, the Unattainable; discontent; invectives against hindrances of all kinds; struggles against jealousy, envy, and persecution, trouble the clear spring; and thus we see the joyous company break up, and become joyless, misanthropic hermits. How difficult is it to make it intelligible to talent of every kind and degree, *that the Muse is a willing and delightful companion on the journey of life, but in no wise a safe guide!*

"When, at our entrance into the life full of action and of effort, and scant in pleasures, in which we must all, be we what we may, feel ourselves

dependant on a great Whole, we ask back all our early dreams, wishes, hopes,—all the delicious joys and facilities of our youthful fairy-land,—the Muse abandons us, and seeks the company of the man who can bear disappointment cheerfully, and recover from it easily; who knows how to gather something from every season; who can enjoy the glassy ice-track and the garden of roses, each at its appointed time; who understands the art of mitigating his own sufferings, and looks watchfully and industriously around him where he may find another's pain to soothe, another's joy to enhance.

"Then do no years sever him from the benign goddesses, who, if they delight in the bashfulness of innocence, also give their support to far-looking prudence; here foster the germ full of hope and promise; there rejoice in the complete, accomplished man, in his full development.

"And thus be it permitted me to close this outpouring of the heart with a few words of rime.

Jüngling, merke dir, in Zeiten
Wo sich Geist und Sinn erhöht
Dass die Muse zu *begleiten*
Doch zu *leiten* nicht versteht.

GOETHE."

The following letter has a peculiar and melancholy interest, having been written on the day he was attacked by the malady which terminated his life.

"To Wilhelm von Humbold.

"After a long involuntary pause I begin as follows, at once, and without premeditation. Animals are educated through their organs, said the antients; I add, and men too; but then, they have the advantage of being able to educate their organs in return.

"For every act, and consequently for every talent, something innate is required, which works spontaneously, and unconsciously brings with it the necessary abilities. Hence its operation is so little the effect of consideration, that though it has its own rules within itself, it can at length run on without end or aim.

"The earlier a man becomes aware that there is a business, an art, which will aid him in the improvement and elevation of his natural qualities, the happier is he; what he takes in from without in no respect injures his own individuality. The best genius is that which receives every thing into it-

self, knows how to appropriate every thing to itself, without the smallest prejudice to its true fundamental bent—to that which is called character; rather first brings it out and puts it into the greatest possible activity.

"Here occur the manifold relations between the Conscious and the Unconscious. Let us just imagine a person of musical talent who opens a fine score—consciousness, and unconsciousness, would stand in the relation of a woof and warp—a simile I am so fond of.

"The organs of man, by means of exercise, instruction, reflection, success, and failure, assistance and opposition, and then reflection again for ever, unconsciously connect the Acquired with the Innate in a free activity, which at length produces an unity that sets the world in amazement. Let these few general remarks serve for a rapid answer to your question, and for an explanation of the little paper I send you back.

"It is now above sixty years since the conception of *Faust* had a distinct pre-existence in my youthful mind, though the complete series lay less clearly before me. Now I have let the design slip softly by me, and have only worked out the passages most interesting to me, singly; so that in the second part there are gaps, which it would be ne-

cessary to fill, in order to connect it with the rest in equal interest.

"But here came the great difficulty—to accomplish that by plan and character, which the spontaneous activity of nature alone can properly attain to. It were not well, however, if, after so long a life of activity and reflection, even this were impossible; and I have no fear that people will be able to discriminate the old from the new, the former from the latter; but this we will leave future readers to decide.

"Let me hear how you go on in your labours. Riemer is, as you know, occupied in similar studies, and our evening conversations often touch the confines of the subject.

"Forgive the delay of this letter. Even in a seclusion like mine, there is seldom an hour in which one has leisure to explore these secrets of our being.

"Your truly attached

J. W. GOETHE."

"Weimar,
March 17*, 1832."

* The day of his fatal attack.

CONCLUSION.

" Wer keine Erinnerung hat
Kann auch keine Hoffnung haben."—GOETHE.

" When Goethe's most intimate friends began the task of looking over the rich literary bequest he left to the world, they soon found that preparations had been made for another number of *Kunst und Alterthum*, and that some papers were actually ready for press.

" Goethe had often said that it was his intention to close the work with this third number of the sixth volume, and that he was only prevented doing this by the completion of *Faust*, which he had imposed on himself as an indispensible task.

" It appeared to us, therefore, a pious duty, both to our dear departed friend and to the public, not to leave this intention unfulfilled; but, as far as we were able, to adopt and carry forward his design.

" Be it permitted us to cast a glance over the period of sixteen years, during which Goethe laboured to excite a generous, cosmopolitan feeling for Art and Literature; and thus, in the midst of

his seclusion, to satisfy that desire for intellectual sympathy which was inherent in his nature.

"Our readers will permit us to explain ourselves by a figure. On the stone parapet which surrounds the platform of Strasburg cathedral are lines deeply cut towards all points of the compass, which accurately mark the horizontal direction in which the chief cities of Europe lie with reference to that centre. You feel yourself, as it were, the central point of one quarter of the globe; you say to yourself, now, if my glance could follow this precise line, uninterrupted by mountain or valley, I should see Naples; or this, a little to the right, would show me Paris. Distances vanish; the remotest points seem to approach, and the breast expands with the idea—the sensation—of connection with so vast a Whole.

"And by this emblem would we try to illustrate the prevailing tendency of *Kunst und Alterthum*. Its object was not to announce or describe great, isolated, and imposing productions; but with accurate, practiced glance, like a watchful warder, to keep a vigilant look-out in all directions, where anything excellent or promising appeared; where encouragement, guidance, sympathy were needed; where it was expedient to warn against wrong tracks, to point out, explain, illustrate right ones;

to exhibit the meritorious productions of predecessors and of cotemporaries; and, above all, to awaken and foster a liberal, observant sense of the community of every thing good and beautiful, under whatever latitude it appeared, in whatever language it were uttered; in short, to raise up a grand cosmopolitan literature.

"Long and bloody wars were scarcely ended, the passionate national antipathies to which they had given birth somewhat appeased, and nations awakening to a consciousness of their own onesidedness and prejudice, when Goethe revisited his paternal city, after long years of absence (1814).

"With a feeling of renewed youth he embarked on the Rhine, visited both banks*, delighted in the rich treasures of art which abound at Köln, and admired the invaluable collection of old German master-pieces which the unwearied industry of Messrs. Boisserée and Bertram have brought together at Heidelberg.

"He immediately felt an irresistible impulse to lend his aid to the encouragement of this taste. At the same time he raised a warning voice against that exclusive partiality for old German art which manifested itself.

* The description of this tour forms part of one of the posthumous volumes just published.—*Transl.*

"The admirable commentary on the Last Supper of Leonardo da Vinci, which shortly appeared in the *Kunst und Alterthum,* may be adduced as the most concise practical exemplification of Goethe's maxim,—that falsehood and error are to be combated less by direct attack and polemical controversy, than by continued setting-forth and inculcation of the True and the Right.

"His tour on the Rhine had been productive not only of profound, acute observations on art; the brightest, most gladsome pictures of life and nature had followed him to his home. Who does not recollect that incomparable description of the Rochus festival near Bingen, in which characteristic delineation, animated motion, and the freshest colouring are blended with *näif* and cordial humour, in one rich, graceful, and living picture of popular manners.

"Nor was it only what presented itself to his own senses that he formed into delightful pictures. A curious poem in the Alsacian dialect, called *Pfingstmontag,* was published at Strasburg. With equal ease and vivacity Goethe transferred himself into the circumstances of the time and place; unravelled the most hidden peculiarities of the idiom, and the habits of the people, particularly in their deep connection with our mother tongue, our man-

ners and national culture; made us feel ourselves at home in this foreign comedy, and first awakened the poet's fellow-citizens to a sense of his great merits.

"An old Latin manuscript found at Köln excited his interest in a like manner. He traced its origin, showed its popular value, caused it to be translated, and illustrated it with the most elegant and instructive remarks.

"He took the liveliest and most generous interest in the literature and art of other countries; and Lord Byron, Manzoni, Salvandy, and others, found in him the ablest and warmest champion.

"Ever observant of that pure, deep, expressive tone of nature which breathes from out old popular songs and traditions, he enriched his pages with songs from the modern Greek, the Scotch, Irish, old Bohemian and Servian, and with poems from the Persian and Indian; brought the most unwonted scenes before our eyes; sought by every means to widen our mental horizon, to represent Poetry, Art, and Literature, as the common bright and beautiful bond of all civilized nations. The appearance of the fragments of the *Phaethon of Euripides*, skilfully put together by the eminent philologist Gottfried Hermann, rekindled Goethe's old love for a tragedian whose genius was so akin

to his own. He immediately put in action all his extraordinary powers of enquiry and divination to effect a restoration of the lost tragedy. He wove together the translated fragments, with short hints full of acuteness, and of the faculty for combination; and on the slender thread afforded by single passages, often of not more than a line, he spun the Idea of the whole piece with such felicity to a conclusion, that we were enabled to form a perfect conception of the whole, in all its simple grandeur. His commentary and explanation of the *Bacchantes of Euripides* were equally learned and graceful.

"But with whatever love he turned to antiquity, 'whence alone pure culture for the higher nature of man, and for the nobler spirit of philanthropy, is to be hoped or expected,' this did not prevent his hailing with interest and cordiality whatever the present time produced of truly excellent.

"'For he who occupies himself exclusively with the past, falls at last into danger of pressing to his heart a lifeless, withered mummy.' It is sufficient here to mention the pleasure with which he recognized the value of Ruksthuhl's services to the German language,—the merits of von Hagen's *Olfrid und Lisena*, of Count von Plateu's *Neue Ghaselen*, Amalie von Helwig's translation of

Frithiof's *Sage*, and the admirable translation of Servian ballads by Mdlle. von Jacob, Grimm and Gerhardt, Varnhagen von Ense's animated and animating Biographies*, Solger's Correspondence and posthumous works, Rochlitz on Music (*Für Freunde der Tonkunst*), *&c.*

"With equal interest he watched all rising talent in other countries. Béranger, Merimé, Vitet, Stapfer, Quinet, Stendhal, the earlier contributors to the *Globe*, and Victor Hugo, found respectful and appretiating judgment at his hands. Among the young authors of Britain, Bulwer and Carlyle peculiarly attracted him; and the beautiful, pure nature of the latter, his calm, delicate spirit of apprehension, heightened Goethe's esteem for his talents into the most affectionate regard.

"Whatever appeared in the arts of Design was placed in its right light, and judged with reference both to its motives and to its execution. Thoroughly averse from that onesided, depreciating, unfruitful criticism which delights only in the detection of defects and shadows, his only object, as soon as he discovered mind and talent, was to enlighten the possessor as to their nature and their

* Author of a Life of Blücher; of the old Prince of Dessau; and some others, which enjoy a high reputation.—*Transl.*

power; to warn him against false directions, and to encourage and promote every honest endeavour by sincere sympathy. And while he accurately observed, and most clearly described, the effect which a work produced on himself, this very description became in its turn a work of art,—a pure mirror, in which the author might, if he paid the least attention, become distinctly aware of all his merits and all his defects.

"Nowhere a trace of that arrogant, *tranchant*, dogmatical tone which his long admitted mastership might perhaps have rendered excusable, but which is so infinitely unseemly in less qualified critics, who handle the sceptre of criticism like the rod of a pedagogue who thinks it incumbent on him to show his power by continual castigation*.

* The following extract from the *Tag-und-Jahres Hefte* may be taken as an instance, among many, of Goethe's superiority to the mean and vulgar taste for "cutting up," and for the discovery of the defective and ridiculous side of things.

"That we resolutely declined and avoided the Spiteful, the Depreciating, the Destructive, be this a proof. At the beginning of the year a little comedy was sent to me by a worthy friend, with the title, The Phrenologist (*der Schädelkenner*), the object of which was to make the respectable labours of a man like Gall ludicrous and contemptible. I sent it back, with a candid

"We may safely affirm that it would not be easy to find a great poet and author who more freely and gladly acknowledged the merits of others, or

explanation, which, as going into the subject on general grounds, deserves a place here.

"In returning the pretty little piece, as not applicable to our purposes, I hold it my duty, considering the friendly terms we are on, to give you my reasons distinctly.

"In our theatre we avoid as much as possible every thing that can have a tendency to degrade scientific pursuits or experiments in the eyes of the people; partly from our own peculiar principles, partly on account of the neighbourhood of the university; it would have an ill effect if those things which are earnestly pursued there, were here treated lightly and ludicrously.

"Many a scientific experiment, the object of which is to extort some secret from nature, may, from its own character, or perhaps in part from the *charlatanérie* of its author, present a ludicrous side; and we must not censure the comic writer who gives it a side-blow *en passant*. We are by no means pedantic about it; but we have carefully avoided every thing, the main tendency of which was to satirize philosophical or literary pursuits, new theories of medicine, and the like. On these grounds we should not like to deliver over the extraordinary doctrines of Gall (which, like those of Lavater, may very possibly not be devoid of foundation) to ridicule; especially as we might annoy and mortify some of our respectable hearers."

Weimar, January 24, 1803.

who more efficiently promoted the general recognition of them, than Goethe. Whether, in the retirement of his closet, he met one of the noble spirits of former times, or, looking out into the busy world, marked the ardent efforts of a youthful cotemporary or the unappretiated merit of modest talent, he was ever impelled urgently to recall the former to public attention as models; equitably and gently to award justice and encouragement to the latter, and to incite them to rise continually in their demands upon themselves.

"Thus, living in unbroken sympathy and participation in the great Whole; joyfully hailing every pure ray of light and of truth, every fresh dawning of nobler sentiments and higher culture which broke forth from the night of delusion or of national prejudice, at the most advanced age he continually renewed his youth; he was never weary of strewing abroad fruitful seed for future harvests, untroubled by envy or malignity, unshaken by hostile controversy or malignant bigotry.

'Nichts vom Vergänglichen! wie's auch geschah,
Uns zu verewigen sind wir ja da*,'

exclaims he, and finds himself richly indemnified by the veneration and love of the Greatest and the

* Nothing of the transitory! be it as it may—
We are here that we may immortalize ourselves.

Best of every country; by the perception of the quiet growth of his influence on more or less extensive circles of his cotemporaries, even in the most distant regions. Let us hear him once more, how tranquil, how tranquillizing, is his language:

"'The labours of the best poets and æsthetical writers of all nations have manifestly, for some time past, been addressed to the whole human race. In each particular work, be it historical, mythological, fictitious, more or less arbitrarily conceived, we may discern this universal tendency more and more clearly appearing, — gleaming through all that is national or individual.

"'And as, in the intercourses of practical life, a similar spirit prevails, and insinuates itself through all that is rude, savage, cruel, false, and selfish on earth, and tends to the universal diffusion of a certain degree of mildness and humanity; we may hope, not indeed that universal peace will be the result, but yet that the inevitable conflict will become gentler,—war less cruel—victory less insolent.

"'That, then, in the poetry of every nation, which indicates or promotes this spirit, that is it, which others must adopt and appropriate. We must study the peculiarities of each, in order that we may give them their due weight, and know how

to regulate our dealings with it accordingly; for an acquaintance with the peculiarities of a nation are like a knowledge of its language and its coin; they facilitate our intercourse with it—nay, they alone render intercourse possible.

" 'A true, universal spirit of tolerance and forbearance is most securely attained when we suffer the peculiarities of individuals or of nations to rest on their own grounds, and yet hold fast to the persuasion that the distinction of the supremely Excellent is this—*that it belongs to the whole race of man.* To such a sort of mediation or mutual appretiation, Germans have long contributed. He who understands and studies the German tongue finds himself in a fair or market where all nations offer their wares; he acts as an interpreter, and at the same time enriches himself.

" 'We are more and more in a condition to discover what national and popular poetry really are; for, properly speaking, true Poetry is but one. It belongs neither to people nor to nobles; neither to the king nor to the peasant. He who feels as *a true man* will be virtually, though unconsciously, a poet; its power over a simple and even rude people is resistless; yet it is not denied to the most civilized nations, for it pervades the whole history of man, as integral, inseparable part.

"'The horizon of the literature of a country may often be obscured for many years, so that it may be difficult to arrive at any clear estimate of the highest merit. *For cotemporaries are very easily misled in their judgments of eminent men;* what is peculiar to the person embarrasses them; the current and turmoil of life distorts their view, hinders knowledge and appretiation. But dust, mist, and vapour, pass away, sink, and are dispersed; and we see the regions before us lie in clear outline, with all their lights and shadows; and we look on them with that serenity of mind with which we are wont to contemplate the silvery moonlight of a cloudless night.'"

"And thus be it ours, with these characteristic words of the great Departed, and *in his name*, to take leave of the public; if any parting may be thought of, where so many thousand noble germs and seeds remain indestructible, and a chain extends into all time, fruit succeeding to blossom, one effect following on another, in boundless, rich, productive continuity.

FRIEDRICH von MÜLLER."

Just as I had, as I thought, concluded a work already too long, I received another pamphlet of Kanzler von Müller's—"Goethe in his Ethical Peculiarities" (*Goethe in seinen ethischen Eigenthümlichkeit*). To translate it all was out of question, and indeed a good deal of it has been rendered needless by other matter already inserted. I could not, however, omit the following brief extracts, for which no other place than this remains.

S. A.

"I hold it my duty to record here an expression Wieland once used to me. 'And if,' said he, 'I had cause to be ever so angry with Goethe, or to feel myself ever so much offended or aggrieved by his conduct, and I recollected (what nobody can know better than I) what incredible services he rendered our sovereign during the early years of his reign; with what entire self-forgetfulness he devoted himself to his service; how much that was noble and great that yet slumbered in the princely youth, he first called forth; I could fall on my knees before him, and praise and worship our Master Goethe for this, more than for all the productions of his genius or his intellect.'

"The mutual respect of Karl-August and Goethe was so profound, each had such a religious reverence

for the character and the slightest peculiarities of the other, that, while they reposed unconditional confidence in each other, they always treated each other with a certain delicate caution, like equal and sovereign powers."

"Once, when in the first years that succeeded the battle of Jena, the duke's frankness in the expression of his political opinions, and his strong and undisguised attachment to the court of Prussia, excited serious anxiety, Goethe tranquillized me with these words: 'Let us fear nothing. The duke is one of the race of those primeval spirits (*Urdämonen*) whose granite-like character never bends, and which can never be destroyed. He will always come unharmed out of every danger; of that he is himself distinctly conscious, and therefore he can dare and attempt so much that would have caused the ruin of another long ago.'

"How, on the other hand, Karl-August honoured and loved his Goethe may be seen in the simple words he addressed to his friend, thanking him for his good wishes on his birthday, the third of September, 1809:

'I give you my best thanks for your congratulations on this day. If *you* are in health, spirits,

and activity, as long as I can pass happy days with you, so long will my existence be most precious to me. Farewell,

KARL-AUGUST."

and the following laconic postscript, highly characteristic, considering the day on which it was written:

"Whom in Göttling's place? a very eminent man, at all events*."

"In answer to the frequent and pressing requests of his friends that he would give the details of his life, after his coming to Weimar, he once said to me, 'The true history of the first ten years of my Weimar life I could recount only under the garb of a fable or fairy tale: as matter of fact the world would never believe it. That circle, in which pure

* I give the original, as the use of the *du*, and the familiar affectionate tone of the whole are untranslateable.

"Meinen besten Dank für deinen Antheil an dem heutigen Tag statte ich Dir ab. Wenn Du thätig, froh und wohl bist, so lange ich noch mit Dir gute Tage erleben kann, so wird mir mein Daseyn höchst schätzbar bleiben. Leb wohl. KARL-AUGUST."

P.S.—Wen an Göttlings Stelle? doch einen sehr bedeutenden."

benevolence and just acknowledgement of merit, occupied the highest station; in which serious studies were in full activity by the side of the most extravagant projects, and the most cordial sympathy existed in spite of dissimilar views;—even before me who was an actor and a witness of it all—already rises as a mythological groupe. I should give pain to many, and pleasure to few, and should never satisfy myself. To what end? I am glad to have my life behind me; what I have been and achieved, the world may know; how it has fared with the individual, shall remain my own secret.'

"But the piety of his princely friend has preserved the most valuable part of the manuscript documents of that time for a grateful posterity. On the very evening before his death Karl-August made provision for the publication of these precious relics at some future period."

"Goethe's enlarged views led him to estimate every character, and turn it to account, with reference to its individual peculiarities. He despised every kind of violent interference with the convictions or ways of thinking of others. He lived on the best and friendliest terms with people infinitely

remote from himself in opinion and in education, if he did but see vigorous, practical qualities, or any peculiar excellency."

"'All business,' he writes to his prince, concerning the affairs of the university of Jena, 'can be set in motion by ethical levers alone; hence every thing depends on personal qualities, which must be differently dealt with in every instance. If you are certain of the love of an individual for his branch of art, it is best to let him alone; only exacting method; by which means you keep meritorious men in good humour. Hence, indeed, arise as many little worlds as individuals."

"Never did he employ the great influence granted to him by his prince and friend, for selfish ends, or to the injury of any one. I can indeed affirm of my own knowledge, that among the numerous letters and confidential suggestions which have been preserved among the duke's papers, there is not one to be found in which he does not plead with the warmth of personal interest on behalf of some instance of honest service, or of promising talent."

"All who had lived in his house, or had been immediately about his person, retained the strongest attachment and veneration for him, even although he had been unable to comply with their wishes. Where is the burgher of this town, the neighbour, the servant or helper, who ever came near him, that does not bear in his heart for life the picture of his noble, dignified presence; his gravely significant, or kindly-cheerful converse?"

"One of his highest enjoyments was the requital of any kindness or service he had received—but always in an unusual manner. He knew how to enhance the value, in a way peculiar to himself, by waiting for the fitting moment, by the form and significancy of his gift. How many of us remember with emotion the morning after his jubilee-day, when he sent round his two grandsons, then little children, from house to house, to greet his loving fellow-citizens with their childish expressions of his thanks for the kindness they had shown him, in illuminating the street from the theatre to his own house the night before."

"He knew no such thing as a trifle: for his

manner of treating it, and the thought he put into it, converted it into a thing of importance."

"Goethe had a strong liking for the Enigmatical, which frequently interferes with the enjoyment of his works. I have often heard him maintain that a work of art, especially a poem, which left nothing to divine, could be no true, consummate work; that its highest destination must ever be to excite to reflection; and that the spectator or reader could never thoroughly enjoy and love it, but when it compelled him to expound it after his own mode of thinking, and to fill it up out of his own imagination*."

"I shall never forget the night on which he exclaimed, 'Do you think I am to be frightened by a coffin? No strong-minded man suffers the belief in immortality to be torn from his breast."

* I remember long ago hearing a remark in which I then concurred, and see more and more reason to think true—that Goethe is the most *suggestive* of all writers.—*Transl.*

THE END.

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